
00035703

NOT TO BE ISSUED OUT
WITHOUT PERMISSION.

00035703

Digitized with financial assistance from

HT Parekh FOUNDATION

An Initiative by HDFC

WITH YOU, RIGHT THROUGH

on 15 October, 2018

RUSSIA AS IT REALLY IS

RUSSIA
AS IT REALLY IS

BY

CARL JOUBERT

JALKA JALKA CHTO NIKOLAI SPEET !
(What a pity that Nicholas sleeps !)

35703 ac



LIBRARY OF THE BOMBAY BRANCH OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY

T.T. 8-10

LONDON
EVELEIGH NASH
1904

All rights reserved
Entered at the Library of
Congress, Washington, U.S.A.

PREFACE

It is my object, in the following pages, to give a true and faithful account of the present state of the Russian Empire. That many books have been published on the subject within the last few years I am aware. Volume after volume describing social and even political life in Russia has made its appearance; but all are written from the point of view either of the traveller, or of the alien politician who seeks to demonstrate the effects of Russian expansion on the policy of his own particular country. Some have been written with but scanty knowledge and restricted powers of observation, others are dependent on official information for the facts (?) which they set forth.

Not long ago I was honoured with the presentation of two books on Russia by the author of them. I took time to read them, and then I laid them aside, and pondered how those books could have been written, published and sold to the public. They purported to describe Russia—it might almost as well have been Timbuctoo. And they were not novels at that, but works dealing with the political and social life of Russia. I presume that the author of them derived his knowledge of the country from

a short residence among the Russian element in Whitechapel, and from the works of contemporary writers; and armed with so great authorities considered himself competent to deal with his subject.

I do not challenge the rights of any man. But it is unfortunate when a few scribbling pens can lead a nation to false impressions. And here I would point out that the Russian immigrant to this country knows about as much of his own country as the average street pedlar in Whitechapel knows of the British Empire.

I took some friends of mine one day to Whitechapel to demonstrate this very fact. I gave them leave to select their own subjects for examination. They found the man they wanted, and we sat down to talk. He was a well-dressed man who could read and write Russian.

"You are a Russian?"

"Yes, sir."

"From what part of Russia?"

"From Jacobstadt."

"Could you tell me to what State Jacobstadt belongs?"

"I do not know."

"Can you tell me any city or large town near Jacobstadt?"

The man brightened up.

"Oh yes, sir, Dinabourg is near Jacobstadt."

"How many versts?"

"I don't know. It is two hours by rail."

"Is there a railway from Jacobstadt to Vitebsk?"

"I don't know."

"How far is Riga from Jacobstadt?"

"I don't know."

"Has Jacobstadt a Governor in residence?"

"I don't know, sir. But she has a Pristav."

"How do you know that?"

"Because I had a fight with a man and I was brought before the Pristav."

"How did you come to England, and by what road?"

"I came from Jacobstadt to Kovno by rail, and from there I stole over the frontier in the dark."

My friends were not satisfied with the examination of one man only, so they found another who had served in the Russian army for six years.

He said that he was born in the country, his father was a farmer, and the nearest town to his home was Pockroy.

"In what county is Pockroy?"

"Ponevigeskaja."

"And in what State is Ponevjes?"

"Kovenskaja."

"And where is the nearest railroad to your home?"

The man thought for a long time and then he answered:

"I believe it is Sahgar."

"But Sahgar has no railroad to this day," I objected.

"Oh, then it must be Shavli."

"But Shavli has no railroad. Surely your nearest railway was at Radsivilishki; it is only twelve versts from Pockroy, and it is the terminus of the Libavski Romainskaja Railway."

"Oh, yes!" he answered. "I have heard of it."

Now the terminus has been established at Radsivilishki with round houses and machine shops for the last thirty years.

I passed on to his army career. He told me that he had served in Kharkoff; but he did not know if there was a Governor in Kharkoff.

We questioned several other Russians; but none of them knew the name of the State in which he had lived, or the seat of the Governor. They could not answer questions that a nine-year-old schoolboy in England would have no difficulty in answering.

What knowledge, then, can be derived from these immigrants from Russia as to the social and political condition of their country? And what is the value of a book that draws inspiration from such a source, or from the cursory examination of the country that a few months of travel afford?

A man must live in Russia to be able to speak with authority of her attributes—but there he is not allowed to speak. He must, with eyes hard strained across the level plains and over and beyond the Ural Mountains, examine diligently the signs of life in the sullen masses which creep slowly—ah, how slowly!—towards the light; but let him look to it that his eyes are not blinded. He must listen with attentive ear to the voices that call out of the silence of the night to catch the muttered whisper of the truth—but the hands of the Government are there to stop the ears of the inquisitive. His heart must beat in unison with the pulses of the

nation, that he may feel the smouldering fires of her wrath, and know the dull lethargy of her moods—but let him beware of the sword of the Tsar which the tender-hearted cannot stay.

Therefore from Russia herself we can get no word of truth. The traveller can only give us the outward and visible signs—the student can but repeat with parrot cries the words that he has read from the books of the travellers. Only now and again a forked flame of light rends the sable darkness of the cloud that broods over the heart of the nation, when Tolstoi speaks, or Gorky with bloody fingers smears, for the world to see, a hideous picture of infamy and misery and crime.

It has been my lot to spend nine years in Russia. During that period I have visited every Government in the Empire; I have associated with every class; I have been the guest of Princes and the bedfellow of peasants; I have feasted in the palaces of St. Petersburg with the dissolute, and I have sat at the feet of the greatest thinker and philanthropist in Russia. And I, too, have thought sometimes. And my thoughts I have carried in my brain—for it is dangerous to think in Russia, and a thousand times more dangerous to commit those thoughts to writing. I have acquired the languages of the country, Russian and corrupt Russian, Polish, Lettish, Lithuanian and Yiddish.

Such are my authorities for this book; and I offer them as my apology for adding one more volume to the long tale of books on Russia.

For many of the opinions which I hold I shall be

condemned—I do not write to order, and no Emperor nor King shall hold a mortgage on my thoughts—much less on my convictions. Every man who is born into the world is either a part or nothing of the great whole; he is endowed with brains and reasoning powers—they are given to him for his use. Why, then, should he be bound down by conventionality and fashions of thought? Why should he hesitate to express fearlessly the convictions which he holds?

CARL JOUBERT.

CONTENTS

PART I

"HOLY RUSSIA"

CHAP.		PAGE
I.	The Holy Tsar	1
II.	The Holy Church	7
III.	The Army	14
IV.	Justice	22
V.	Education	28
VI.	The Aristocracy	35
VII.	Traders	43
VIII.	The Moujik	52
IX.	The Missionary	58
X.	The Settlement	62
XI.	Science	72
XII.	Literature and the Censor	77

PART II

THE JEW IN RUSSIA

I.	The Rabbi	84
II.	Education of the Jew	96
III.	The Jewish Merchant	101
IV.	The Russian Jewess	108
V.	Family Life of the Jews	115
VI.	The Jewish Soldier	123
VII.	The Treatment of the Jews	130

PART III

A POWER ABOVE THE TSAR

CHAP.		PAGE
I.	I Re-visit Russia in a Hurry	138
II.	Kolka	144
III.	I become a Russian Pathologist	150
IV.	Dr. Denmanovitch	161
V.	A Mysterious Old Gentleman	168
VI.	The Polkovnik	176
VII.	Dr. Anatovitch	184
VIII.	Prisoners	192
IX.	A Message from Kolka	198
X.	Ivan	206
XI.	In the Wake of the Rota	216
XII.	The Widow	227
XIII.	A Post-Mortem Examination	237
XIV.	A Test of Sight and Speech	245
XV.	The Escape	254
XVI.	In Hiding	264
XVII.	Waiting	272
XVIII.	Liberty	280
	An Open Letter to the Tsar	291

APPENDICES

Appendix I. The Titles of His Imperial Majesty Nicholas Alexandrovitch 296

Appendix II. A List of some of the principal Outrages and Murders perpetrated on the Jews by the Christians 297

PART I

"HOLY RUSSIA"

CHAPTER I

THE HOLY TSAR

His Imperial Majesty Emperor Nicholas Alexandrovitch, Autocrat of All the Russias.

By these and many other titles is He known—the Holy Tsar of Russia. He himself has commanded that He should be so called; for no subject can give Him honours and titles, He alone can confer them upon Himself. And, therefore, is He known as *Zembla Bogh*—"The God on Earth," "The Pope of the Greek Church," "The Master and Maker of the Holy Synod," "The Adjuster of the Earth," "The Peace and Goodwill on Earth."

For Russia is the Tsar. The Tsar is Russia. The Synod belongs to the Pope; and the Pope is the Tsar, and the Tsar is the God on Earth. And as His sacred personality forbids the indignity of titles and honours conferred by mortal man — unless indeed they be the dignities bestowed by foreign rulers, which, by courtesy, He deigns to accept—so also is the emblem of His power sacred. No man

may touch His Holy Crown. Let the heads of the Senate, aye, and the Metropolitans themselves, keep their hands off. The *Zembla Bogh* alone shall place it on the brow of the God on Earth. And let all the people fall down and worship him, and say, Amen.

Mark the Majesty of his descent. As the Mikado of Japan can boast direct descent from the "God of the Sun," so can Nicholas II., Tsar of all the Russias, and "God on Earth," trace back His line to Romanoff.

Now Romanoff was a Robber.

He has His Ministers and officers of State. By Him they are appointed, and at His pleasure they hold their offices. They are in the palm of His hand, and under His holy heel. Let them see to it that they offend not against His will, nor provoke His displeasure. For then will the doctors in St. Petersburg be summoned in consultation, and rest and change will be prescribed for the wayward Minister. Cannes, Nice, or Paris may know him for a time; but if he drifts back to Russia he will avoid St. Petersburg, for the waters of the Neva are injurious to the health, and the grim fortress of St. Peter and St. Paul overlooks and underlies the river. Rather will he get him to his country seat, and in retirement eke out the remnant of his days.

He lives at the *Tsarskoi Selo*, the palace of the "God on Earth." Situated on the Duderhof Hills she lifts to heaven her golden cupolas and countless minarets, a landmark to the country-side, a monument rising out of the plain to the glory of the "God on Earth," an altar whose horns are drenched

with daily hecatombs. All around the palace is a mighty wall of fine design, enclosing the sacred precincts of this New Jerusalem. Before the wall at close intervals are stationed huts of wood striped black and white, resembling the barbers' shops of an American city. In every hut there stands a sentry guarding the sacred person of the "God on Earth." Behind the wall is an open paved space, and beyond, another wall with its sentry-boxes and stolid grey-coated sentinels. At every gate-way through the walls a guard of Cossacks is stationed that none may pass unchallenged. In the hand of the Cossacks is the knout, the emblem of order and circumspect behaviour in the kingdoms of the Tsar.

It was my privilege once to enter the sacred precincts, and to penetrate even into the palace itself, under the escort of a certain prince. There were the barbaric splendours of the East, in countless profusion; gold and jewels and precious fabrics woven cunningly in many colours; marble and alabaster columns and pavements, and vaulted ceilings frescoed with grotesque design. Before the jewel-encrusted icons the golden lamps burnt low; and the air was laden with the fumes of incense. And everywhere were soldiers, and the glitter of sword and epaulette; the whispered pass-word and suspicious glance.

We left the palace and the outer walls behind us, and I turned to ask a question:

"What is the meaning of all these soldiers within and without the palace?"

The prince laughed.

"I would rather not answer you," he said. "But since you have come to Russia for the purpose of learning something—whilst you run you may read. That is all."

Although He is the "God on Earth," the "Little Father" of his peoples, worshipped and adored; although all power is His and the Majesty of Dominion, yet will He not venture Himself amongst His subjects—no, not for an hour. For so surely as He went amongst them unattended, would the fate of His murdered Fathers overtake Him. The Tsar goes abroad. Then let the Politzmaister issue his orders, and see that the line of route is clear. So the Politzmaister communicates with the Pristavs; and these are the orders that he gives:

First: to arrest all on the road who cannot give a satisfactory account of themselves, or explain for what purpose they are on that particular road.

Secondly: that all windows and doors by which His Imperial Majesty will pass must be closed and sealed.

Thirdly: no strangers shall be taken in as guests or visitors in any of the houses along the line of route. All guests or visitors who are staying in the houses, including relatives of the owners of the houses, shall forthwith report themselves to the Politzmaister or Pristavs, in order that arrangements may be made for their accommodation elsewhere.

Fourthly: all children must be kept within doors. The windows overlooking the streets must be obscured by blinds.

Fifthly: provisions should be obtained in the houses

along the line of route three days before the day appointed for the passing of His Imperial Majesty, as all shops will be closed until further orders.*

There are also many instructions issued for the information and guidance of those who live in the neighbourhood, too numerous to mention.

I was once tempted to go out into the streets of St. Petersburg in the hope of seeing the Holy Tsar. I was staying in the Hotel de l'Europe, which is in a side-street off the Nevski Prospect, along which thoroughfare he was to pass. But I could not leave the hotel. Regiments of soldiers lined every passage that led to the Nevski Prospect, and barred the way. Every one was in uniform of some sort; every one carried arms. There were not half a dozen men in civilian clothes. It was impossible to break through the barrier of their serried ranks, so I returned to my room in the hotel; and the question which I had put to the prince outside the Tsarskoi Selo recurred to my mind. "What is the meaning of all these soldiers?"

Is it possible that they were there to overawe a peace-loving people, a people who venerate the "Little Father," whose passing form they were anxious to behold? Is it possible that this "God on Earth" is afraid of his chosen people? Or is it that he cannot look them in the face? But, be the reason what it may, the soldiers are there, the Cossacks are there, to say to the humble subject of the "God on Earth," "stand back!"

* These orders apply to provincial towns, and not to St. Petersburg and Moscow.

"God loves the common people, therefore he has made so many of them," said Abraham Lincoln. What is the view of the "God on Earth" on the subject? There are people in enlightened and civilised countries who make excuses for Nicholas Alexandrovitch of the lineage of Romanoff. They will tell you that his autocracy is a sham; that he is hemmed in by a bureaucracy that has bound him hand and foot with chains of steel; that he means well, but is unable to perform. O, charitable people! But not thus lightly shall Nicholas Alexandrovitch escape his responsibilities. For Russia is the Tsar. The Tsar is Russia. The very titles that he has assumed condemn him. For so long as he is "Autocrat of all the Russias," for so long must he bear the burden of his high calling. It is useless for him to shrug and wriggle his narrow shoulders, he cannot shift the load or abate one tittle of his responsibility. Let the "God on Earth" bear it—like a man! *

* See Appendix A.

CHAPTER II

THE HOLY CHURCH

SHE is established, and stands firm upon the solid foundations of Superstition and Ignorance—two rocks on which the lapse of centuries have left no traces in Russia, for they are carefully preserved in darkness for the purposes of the "Zembla Bogh," who is the head of the Greek Catholic Church, and whose power is supreme.

Beneath him, is the Procurator, the ecclesiastical head, who is also tutor to the Tsar in his tender years—if, indeed, the term is applicable to the scions of the house of Romanoff. But when the "God on Earth" has arrived at man's estate and with his sacred hand has placed the crown upon his brow, then the Procurator becomes the first adviser to the Tsar, in matters secular or ecclesiastical.

The Metropolitans, by order of the Tsar, arrange the ritual to be observed in the churches, issue special prayers for special occasions, and regulate the amount of holiness to be observed in the house of every moujik. There is no doubt that they are adept at stage-management. No one can deny the impressiveness of the ritual, of the deep bass chanting of the popes, of the subdued light through which the little lamps before the icons shine like lonely

stars, casting their flickering beams on gilded and bejewelled pictures of the "Holy Mother" and the saints. They know their business, these Metropolitans, and the fear of the Church and of the confessional is over the people; whilst they drug their senses with fragrant incense and the touch of holy water.

Then, lest the mind of the people should be occupied with unprofitable speculation and dreams, the word goes forth that their thoughts must be directed in harmless channels. Give superstition to the ignorant, and behind the doors of the moujik's cot the talk will be of spooks and devils, and not of rights and wrongs.

Therefore, superstition is given a free hand, and to each district fallacies and beliefs are preached in accordance with the temper and traditions of the people. To the true moujik one mode of superstition is given, in Archangel another. What is good in Bessarabia is useless in Don Cossacks. What rouses the curiosity in Kourland falls flat in Orenburg. The creeping terrors of Kovno are the laughing-stock of Podolsk. But each receives according to its wants, not grudgingly or of necessity. Every state has her own spirits and her special devils; they are hers to ponder, to evade, to propitiate.

Childish and ridiculous as these beliefs may appear to the enlightened, they are very real to the humble and ignorant subjects of the Tsar. If a black crow should perch on a hog's back, no business must be done that day. If a man meets a

funeral he must follow it, otherwise the devil will come to his house. Never turn round if you hear footsteps behind you. It may be the devil who is following to tempt you. By turning round you make a compact with the devil, and no one will take your hand for two days. The moment the icon leaves the house the devils make entry and stay there. At the little lamp in front of the icon all impure souls come to cleanse themselves at midnight. If in the morning the lamp is out, it signifies that the evil souls, unable to purify themselves and gain admission to heaven, have drunk up all the oil.

On Easter Eve the people bring their meat to the church, where it is deposited for the night, each paying a fee in accordance with his means. The pope of the church sprinkles holy water over the repast, so that those who partake thereof on Easter Day may be blessed.

A volume could easily be filled with evidences of the superstition and idolatry practised in the Greek Church throughout Russia.

Here is an instructive story, for the truth of which I can vouch, that serves as an apt illustration of the text. In the State of Grodno there lived a poor Jew, who made a living by selling *pirrogs* (meat pies). Every week he journeyed by rail to a neighbouring market town to dispose of his wares. One day he took his seat in a third-class railway carriage with his basket of *pirrogs* to go to the market. There were two moujiks in the carriage with him. Now the *pirrogs* were still hot from the oven, and the smell of them rose through the blanket which

covered the basket and filled the compartment with a grateful odour. The two moujiks were poor men and hungry, and the sweet savour of the *pirrogs* aroused covetous desires in their hearts. They spoke together quietly in the far corner of the carriage. Then they moved across to where the Jew was sitting, and seizing the unfortunate vendor by the collar thrust him through the window, and took possession of the basket of *pirrogs*.

The Jew fell in a heap on the line, opposite to a small signal-hut, where a man with a green flag proclaimed that all was well. The signalman slouched up to the Jew, and turned him over on to his back. Then he went to the nearest telegraph signal station, and reported that a Jew had been thrown out of the train and that he was dead.

So, when the train arrived at the next station a search was made by the railway police, and the basket of *pirrogs* was discovered intact in the possession of the two moujiks. They could not account for the presence of the basket, and they were arrested. But it was only a Jew who had been killed, and the sympathies of the *gendarme* were with the two moujiks.

"Why did you not eat the *pirrogs* and throw the basket away?" he asked confidentially.

"You forget," said one of the moujiks, "that to-day is Friday, and it is not allowed to eat meat."

The murder of a Jew was nothing to them—they were merely following the example set by the "Little Father" and the Procurator. But to eat *pirrogs* on a Friday was an unpardonable sin, which no self-

respecting moujik would commit. To the best of my belief they were not punished.

Now the minds of the simple and ignorant, in order that they may grasp and hold fast to an abstract conception, require some outward sign perpetually before them. Aaron in the Wilderness, seeing that the Israelites were falling away from their faith, in the absence of Moses, set up a golden calf, and cried, "Behold your God!" With the same object in view the Greek Church instituted the use of the icon in Russia.

Doubtless to the educated and enlightened—a very small minority in Russia—the icon is a symbol and nothing more; but to the moujik it is an idol to be worshipped, to be propitiated, to be feared. The Greek Church has given him superstition for a religion, and the icon for a god.

The graven images are set up in every church in the country, and every household has its idol. The splendours of the icons in the larger cathedrals and churches surpass description. St. Isaac's Church in St. Petersburg has more riches than I have seen in any church in Rome. The wealth of precious stones and pure gold in St. Isaac's is not a quantity that can be valued in pounds sterling. And that is only one church out of three hundred in St. Petersburg.

In Moscow there are over five hundred churches. Who shall estimate the riches of the Kremlin with her civil and ecclesiastical buildings? Or of the Terema, once the palace of the Holy Tsar? The Alexanderski Dvoretz and the Malo Dvoretz; the Cathedral of the Assumption with its domes and

cupolas, and walls glittering with grotesque frescoes of sacred subjects; the great Church of the Annunciation, where the Tsar assumes the crown, paved with jaspar, cornelian, and agate; the Arkhanghelski Sabor, where lie the bodies of many Tsars; the Tower of Ivan Veliki, rising to a height of two hundred feet and culminating in a golden dome; the beautiful Cathedral of St. Vassili, with its score of gilded domes and towers; these and five hundred more are the cathedrals, palaces, and churches in Moscow, which serve as the residences of the "God on Earth," or for the worship of the mighty icon.

And they have bells; bells by the tens of thousands; bells that twenty horses can scarcely draw; bells the size of a teacup. The sound of them ascends to the heavens, as though they would compel the Lord of Hosts to give ear to the praise of the holy city, Moscow. For here, on the borderland of East and West, are met the barbaric magnificence of the dark Orient and the fringe of Western civilisation.

And what of the rank and file of the priesthood—the "popes," as they are called? They are drawn from the lower orders of the people. They pass through a seminary, where they receive an education of a scanty nature, as we regard education; but doubtless it is suited to the ministry that lies before them, and they are instructed in all the tricks of their trade. He leaves the seminary and becomes a pope. He conducts his services in his church as prescribed, and he visits the sick and dying when he is paid to do so. For the rest, he is the obedient

and humble tool of the "God on Earth," and he will play cards from morning till midnight.

This is the Church that instructs the young of Russia! This is the Church to which they turn for enlightenment and the spread of civilisation! The Synod belongs to the Pope, and the Pope is the Tsar, and the Tsar is "God on Earth." And the Tsar decrees that all his people shall belong to this Church, that they may stumble in darkness, and lay hold of superstition to guide their steps. Such as refuse to bow the knee to the icon, he orders to be thrust into a burning fiery furnace of persecution and affliction.

Ask the Poles; ask the Finns; ask the Jews.

CHAPTER III

THE ARMY

It is not my intention to recite the numbers of horse and foot and guns that the Imperial Army of the Tsar contains; neither shall I enter into details of the organisation and equipment of the forces. These facts are easily ascertainable by those who desire to acquaint themselves with the subject. The conscientious traveller will have noted them down in his book on Russia; it is even possible that they may be known in Pall Mall.

The facts that I wish to bring forward are to be found in no Blue Book of the Imperial Russian Army, and there is no record of them kept in St. Petersburg. But, like many other accounts in Russia, they are seared with a hot iron on the brains of men and women, and they are never forgotten.

The *Voinskaja Povinost* is the most dreaded ordeal in Russia. The town hall of a provincial town: behind the barrier which divides the room in two is huddled together a motley assortment of men and women, and perhaps a few children. There are mothers and fathers, wives and sons, with faces anxious to the degree of pain. Their solicitude is all for the younger men amongst them, round whom they press, clinging to their arms, and gazing

wistfully into their haggard, callous faces. It is well to assume an air of callous indifference when the heart is full and the words stick in the throat; it is the one little bit of acting which comes naturally to all brave men.

The opening in the barrier is kept by two soldiers that none may pass through until their names are called. In the other portion of the hall there is a table at which some officers are seated, and in front of the table is a long barrel-shaped box with an opening at the top, supported on a trestle.

The young men are sorted out from their relations and formed into a ragged line along the barrier. They are about to take part in a grim game of chance. The stakes are years of human life, and the bank pays nothing if it loses. They file past the ballot-box, dipping their hands in as they pass and drawing out a slip of paper, and in accordance with the number on the paper is their fate decided. For those who have drawn the unlucky numbers, but one hope remains—that they may be found medically unfit.

Within my own observation, I have known young men to starve themselves for two months before the recruiting time so that they might be rejected on medical grounds. Some even maim themselves for life rather than chance that medical examination. Oh, the joy over the rejected! Oh, the tears for those who are taken! It is a pitiable spectacle.

I was once invited by the chief medical officer to accompany him to the *Voinskaja Povinost.* He asked me whether I would like to examine some of

the recruits myself—I have taken a degree in medicine—and I readily assented. I brought joy to the hearts of a good few mothers, and I would have made still more happy, but I feared to overstep the limits of my invitation.

It is true that other nations are called upon to face the ordeal of conscription. It is a fact that they also dislike it, and stories of malingering are not confined to Russia. But there is this difference. In Germany or France a man is taken against his will and made to serve; he is kicked and ill treated by those in authority over him, and eventually he is sent back to civil life without any further indignities.

In Russia the kicks are harder and the ill-treatment more malignant, and to these are added a system of persecution and spoliation which beggars description. Then, too, the Russian has very little, if any, sentiment of patriotism, a virtue which upholds and consoles both the Teuton and the Gaul in the hour of his despondency.

I once asked a wretched mother, who was weeping bitterly over the fate of her son:

"Why all these tears? You ought to be proud that your son is to serve his country."

"Oï, Oï," she answered. "I would not cry if I were a mother in your country, knowing that my son would return with honours. But he will serve his time for nothing, and come home dishonoured."

"But how dishonoured?" I asked.

"You do not know what is before him, Bareen; nobody will associate with a soldier when he

returns. And if he should chance to be crippled he will only be given a certificate that he has the privilege of begging for a living."

The Russian soldier is heavy and dull and slow. He has no initiative whatsoever; he is not encouraged to have any, nor would he dare to possess such a dangerous commodity. With an empty belly he is a very poor creature. With a full belly he is brave, with a stubborn, unreasoning courage that makes him perfectly indifferent as to whether he lives or dies for his country and the Tsar. He is ready then to be driven with his comrades to the slaughter, or to stand his ground and be cut down, that is, as the officers order. It is no affair of his in what manner they dispose of him. He is quite prepared to march with his regiment into the bed of a river, and, flinging himself down with them in the stream, form a human causeway for the passage of the guns, as he did in the Russo-Turkish War.

The rank and file of the Russian army are illiterate. Not 10 per cent. of them can read or write. It was the great-grandfather of the present Tsar who issued an *ukase* that all generals on the active list must know how to read and write! The patient, apathetic ignorance of the Russian soldier is the only quality that makes life bearable to him; and it is also the officer's opportunity, for the Russian officer is a bird of prey, and his men are carrion.

Poor Ivan has been taken for a soldier, and his parents at home rock themselves to and fro in the extravagance of their grief, and blubber prayers to

the icon in the corner of their hovel. But the poignancy of anguish is soon dulled in the hearts of the very poor; the struggle for life and the gnawing pangs of hunger are powerful anæsthetics for the troubles of the mind. And so they go about their tasks once more; but Ivan is not forgotten. The father brings home his meagre wage to his wife, and a few kopeks are put aside for Ivan. There will be a little less food for the others; but Ivan must have something. And every week the store of kopeks is increased, until a rouble has been collected, and a few kopeks over for postage and remuneration to the poor clerk who is to write the letter. It is a proud day for the old moujik and his wife when that letter is at last posted.

Then what becomes of it? It is delivered at the barracks, where it falls into the hands of the company officer. Now Ivan is illiterate, and it is therefore obviously the duty of his officer to open and read his correspondence for him. So the *younker* sends for Ivan and reads as much of the letter as he considers it is good for him to hear. It is even possible that he gives him a few kopeks of the money. Then the captain interviews the *younker*, and there is a further division of the old moujik's rouble. It is well for Ivan if his old father's hard-earned rouble procures for him some relaxation of the brutality that his officers habitually mete out to him. But he must not expect too much for his money.

I have seen officers strike their men in the most savage manner, without reason or provocation. I

have seen an officer kick a private soldier in the stomach and strike him three times with his clenched fist in the face, because the man was occupying a latrine which the officer was waiting to use, and in which the man had a perfect right to be. I have seen, too, a wretched crippled soldier sitting in the porch of a church begging. His begging certificate was his sole pension for the loss of his legs. He asked alms of a member of the nobility who was going into the church. The nobleman turned upon him with a savage curse :

" Thou dog's son ! What art thou doing here ? "

Then stepping across the poor mutilated body he entered the church, and sprinkling himself with holy water got him to his prayers.

A total disregard for the welfare and lives of his men is a characteristic of the Russian officer. They are simply so many units under him, to be instructed and bled in times of peace ; to be driven and sacrificed in war. A good officer will lead his men, and they will follow him to the gates of Hell, and beyond. It is the bad officer who finds it necessary to drive his men. The difference between leading and driving is the difference between a well disciplined and a badly disciplined force. In the Russian army it is driving that predominates.

The callous indifference to the lives of the men extends to officers of the highest rank. They sacrifice them needlessly in war, and show a shocking disregard to the death-rate in their commands in time of peace. No casualty list, of any account, is published in the newspapers. It is better that these details

should not be made public. Consequently, the unhappy relations of the soldier are left to speculate on his fate, and to await his return home, until they are weary of waiting for one who will never come back to them.

In his private capacity the Russian officer is seldom a gentleman. He is drawn from the lower middle classes for the most part, and he is not a very refined person. If you are anxious to make his acquaintance in private life, knock at the third door on the left hand side of the street, where there is a red lamp in the window, after 8 P.M. It is a house which is licensed by the Government, and from which the Tsar draws a considerable portion of his revenue.

The terrors of conscription drive many young men across the frontier under cover of the night. But it is only the more enterprising who thus seek to avoid the ordeal of military service. The moujik is too stupid and lethargic to attempt to avoid his obligations to his Fatherland except by malingering.

Numbers of these fugitives from the military tyranny of the Tsar come to England, and help to swell the huge total of our alien immigrants. In terror lest they should be sent back to Russia, they will say that they belong to any other nation but their own; and they frequently adopt names calculated to mislead the inquisitive as to their origin or nationality.

In conclusion, a word about the Cossacks. There is no question that they are a race of born fighters; keen, agile, and ferocious, and lovers of the bloodiest

work. Formerly they served as the frontier force of the Empire, guarding the peaceful Russians from the inroads of the tribes on the frontier. Now they have other duties assigned to them. They are the pioneers of Russia's colonial expansion, and the compellers of order within her gates.

How they are hated and feared by the people! Let loose upon a mob of unruly students they dash in amongst them knout in hand, and no man, woman, or child in the crowd is spared the curling lash. At the least show of resistance, the sword is out of the scabbard and the streets are red with blood. The yelling crowd breaks and disperses on every side, pursued and cut down by the Cossacks in the frenzy of murder.

I wonder what the Tsar thinks of a London policeman or of a Tammany Hall uniform.

CHAPTER IV

JUSTICE

I SUPPOSE that justice may be considered as one of the essentials of civilisation. In a crude form it exists even among savages. Therefore, it is fair to assume that the government which is without justice is unclean.

Is it possible that Holy Russia is unclean? In the law of Moses (Leviticus ii.) it is laid down that the beasts which are cloven-footed and chew the cud are clean. "And the swine, though he divide the hoof and be cloven-footed, yet he cheweth not the cud; he is unclean to you."

The outward and visible signs—the cloven feet are the courts and the machinery of the law. The chewing of the cud is the conscientious administration and use of the means provided for justice. To be clean, a government must divide the hoof and chew the cud. If it only succeeds in one of these essentials, it is unclean. Even the swine is anxious to appear clean. Watch him lying in his sty. He buries his snout in the mire, so that none may see that he does not chew the cud; but his cloven feet he exposes to the view of all.

The cloven feet of His Imperial Majesty, the Tsar of all the Russias, are patent to the world. He has

his courts of justice, his trial by jury, his Book of Rights, his civil and criminal procedure, and his ukase.

But what about the cud? If he wishes to prove to the civilised world that he chews the cud, and that his Government is clean, he can do so with a stroke of the pen. Let him recall from Siberia and Vladikavkas the honest men whom he has banished thither because they had the courage of their opinions, and spoke or wrote in defence of justice and the right. Until he does so, be sure that the beast is unclean and an abomination.

I have visited the High Courts and Law Courts of all the governments in Russia. I do not propose to deal here with the minor cases, which are tried before the Pristav. A sugar loaf or a rouble will always satisfy him as to the justice of your cause. You can bring it into court with you, and he will tell you where to put it. Nor will I touch upon the Mirovoy Sud or the Mirovoy Syezd, courts which are conducted by one or more judges, whose price varies from a hundred to a thousand roubles. But the Okruznoi Sud (Supreme Court) is deserving of notice; for in this court there is trial by jury and a full bench of judges, attended by advocates and counsel. After the lawyers are through with their arguments, the judges retire to deliberate—and for other purposes. Then they return into court, and the decision is handed to the presiding judge.

On the return of the judges to court, I have frequently seen them drunk; one learned brother

supporting his neighbour to his seat on the bench. A verdict in this court costs some thousands of roubles, to be paid to the presiding judge before he leaves his home for the circuit.

Trial by jury is an absolute farce. The jury, who are drawn from all classes, are for the most part uneducated men. Many of them do not understand the language of the lawyers. They have no say in the verdict, which has probably been paid for some weeks before the trial. But they have other matters to occupy them in court, matters which touch them more closely than the doings and affairs of other men.

They have entered the court, crossed themselves to the icon, and taken their places on the jury bench, with mixed feelings—they are awed by the majesty of the law, and within them is a sensation of pride at the importance of their position. They have on their best clothes and a general air of conscious respectability. The court opens and the trial begins; and they very quickly realise that their part in the farce is simply that of "walking gentlemen." Nevertheless they are the jury, and the glamour of the situation awes them to correct behaviour.

But, anon, first one and then another begins to fidget uneasily, to work his shoulders, to rub his knees together. And then, with twitching fingers, one seizes his leg, and, unable to bear the torture longer, indulges in a luxurious scratch. The others gain courage by his example, and soon they all fall to scratching. The warmth of the court-house has

aroused their enemies to activity; and neither for the judge, nor for the icon, nor even for the picture of the "God on Earth" himself, will they show any respect. How welcome is the retirement from court for a Russian jury only those who have been similarly afflicted can judge.

The duties and responsibilities of a Russian lawyer are, to say the least of it, complex. His first duty is, of course, towards the Tsar; but it is a little difficult to say what his duties are towards his client.

A special court was assembled, by order of the Tsar, to try certain persons for the slaughter of Jews in Kishineff. Counsel were appointed to represent the defendants, and the trial was commenced. It ended, so far as the defendants were concerned, in a few of them receiving slight sentences. Then came the turn of the defending counsel. For their efforts on behalf of their clients some were despatched to Siberia or Vladikavkas, others were struck off the rolls. And the questions which are exercising the minds of the *Presajni Povereni* (Attorney-at-Law) at this moment can be more easily imagined than stated.

With the example of the governors and judges before them, it is hardly to be expected that the police should be free from guile. They are not. The stolid *gorodovoy* in the streets is always on the look out for a tip. He will touch his cap to you like an English crossing-sweeper when you cross the road; and the other hand is always behind him palm upwards. If you happen to be a humble subject of the

Tsar, living in the neighbourhood of his beat, it is as well to place something in it now and again; for he has it in his power to make things unpleasant. He divides the spoil with the thief; and he can give useful information to the burglar as to the easiest method of entry into your house, for he makes a particular study of the windows and doors of the habitations of which he is placed in charge.

His superior officer expects, and gets, a share of the plunder when he is relieved from duty; and he, in his turn, is liable to calls from higher authority; and so on, up to the Pristav, who is also receiving loaf-sugar and *stara vodka* from petty offenders, against the day of reckoning.

In the witness-box, it is scarcely necessary to state, the *gorodovoy* and his superiors are liars; but that, alas! is a failing not confined to the police of the Tsar. There is this difference, however, that whereas the departure from the truth on the part of the police of other countries is deplored, in Russia it is the normal tendency.

The passport system of the country is in the hands of the *Meschanskaia Uprava*,* and under the supervision of the police; and here is another source of income. Juggling with passports may be very remunerative when skilfully managed. The passport is a sacred document in Russia. None may live

* Inhabitants of cities must obtain their passports from the *Meschanskaia Uprava*. Those who live in the country from the *Volostnoia Pravlenia*. People desiring to quit Russia must obtain passports from the Governor of State.

without it; and the theft of this holy certificate of the liberty of the subject is a serious offence. So great is the solicitude of the Tsar for the welfare of his people, that he has adopted this means of knowing exactly where every individual one of them is, and what he is doing.

When I was in Tomsk, on my way to Siberia, my passport "ran out," and it was necessary for me to apply for a new one. There was a good deal of trouble about it, and I became impatient.

"In my country," I exclaimed, "it is only the dogs who are required to have passports."

"They are all dogs in Russia," the official answered surlily.

From the Baltic to the Yenisei the whole country is corrupt. From Governor to *Uryadnik* every man has his price, and is anxious to be offered it. The Government, the Synod, the Army, the Bench are putrid with corruption. Every man preys on his poorer neighbours and cozens his superiors if he can. A certain Burgomaister of St. Petersburg, who robbed widows and orphans, and lent out the money at 500 per cent., was a noble example of the rule, and not the exception.

The cloven hoof is there, but, of a certainty, the Beast does not chew the cud.

CHAPTER V

EDUCATION

THE school system in Russia is generally dictated by the Synod.

The Synod is the Church, and the Church is the Tsar. The Tsar is therefore the teacher of his people. And his indulgence of his pupils is quite touching. On no account will he allow their brains to be overstrained; and no child is compelled to come to his school. There are many different nations and races within the limits of his vast Empire; and the Tsar, with his enlightened understanding, has arranged for every nation to be offered instruction and education in accordance with its requirements, with certain restrictions, and on payment.

The whole system of education in the Empire is under his control. There are no private schools, except for girls; and there is no competition with His Imperial Majesty in the form of independent educational establishments. He does it all by himself, with the assistance of the Metropolitans and the Synod.

There are the elementary schools, where the children of the poor can receive instruction in reading, writing, arithmetic, Russian history, and geography if their parents will pay the fees. There are

the Real Schools, divided into seven classes, for the sons of the wealthier people. From the Real Schools the students can pass on to the Gymnasium, which is also divided into seven classes. Then there are the Universities and Polytechnics.

In none of these institutions are board and lodging provided for the students. Parents sending their children to the Real Schools and the Gymnasiums from outlying towns and villages must arrange for their housing and care within reach of the schools.

I have stated that in the different nations which go to form the Empire of the Tsar different regulations are in force as regards education, and certain restrictions are imposed by His Imperial Majesty in his desire to promote the welfare and enlightenment of his subjects.

First, take the case of the moujik of Russia proper. There are the elementary schools for him, if he is in a position to pay for the education of his children. But he is not.

After all, what does a moujik want with education? His father must bring him up as best he can, and at the age of one-and-twenty he must come to the Voinskaja Povinost and become a soldier. Surely he can eat *kapusta* and black bread without knowing who discovered America! If he knew too much it might become difficult to manage him. It is possible that he would begin to think, and there is nothing more dangerous than the thinking man. He might compare the rule of his "Little Father" with the governments of other countries. What

then? He would learn the translation of two Latin phrases—"Magna Charta" and "Habeas Corpus," and in time he might demand them for himself. He would know what a "Constitution" is, and he would want one. It is far better that he should live his life in happy contentment under the care and protection of an all-wise and all-powerful "God on Earth," to be spoon-fed on ignorance and superstition, with no yearnings for the unattainable, and no knowledge of the laws and customs of foreign heretics. For the moujik decidedly "Ignorance is bliss."

Then as to the Jew. The Jew will not acknowledge the "Holy Mother" nor the divinity of the "God on Earth," therefore measures must be taken to bring him to a repentant frame of mind. It would be manifestly ridiculous to educate him until he has become a member of the Holy Greek Church. But if he will repent and bow the knee to the icon he will be free to enjoy the advantages of education as supplied by the Tsar. How zealous is the "God on Earth" for the conversion of the Jews to the true Faith! Look at the record of the efforts of the last three generations of Tsars on behalf of the souls of the Hebrew race. This touching solicitude for the poor heretic Israelites should bring tears to the eyes of the world.

The methods of conversion of the Jews in Russia savour of the Middle Ages, it is true—and an apology is due to the Middle Ages for the comparison—but the Holy Tsar of Russia is a student of the Bible, and he finds there a precedent for his methods in

the treatment of the Chosen People by the Pharoah who knew not Joseph. There is this difference between them, that whereas Pharoah of old ordered the destruction of the male children of Israel at birth, the Tsar of Russia in his mercy usually allows them a few years of life before he turns the Cossacks loose on them. But it is my intention to deal with the Jews, as a part of the great Russian Empire, later on. It is only the question of their education that concerns us at present.

Since he has been unable to turn them from the religion of their forefathers, the Tsar has forbidden that more than 5 per cent. of them shall receive education. But, even so, he cannot keep them in the utter darkness of ignorance; for in their *chedars* they receive a sound education, which raises them, in this respect, far above their Russian neighbours.

The Poles, like the Jews, are heretics, for they do not acknowledge the Tsar as their Pope; they even have their doubts as to his infallibility! Therefore, they, too, must be kept in the pit of ignorance. Not more than 10 per cent. of their children are allowed to attend schools. The Polish language and the teaching of Polish history are forbidden, and all Polish books; and no Pole is allowed to rise above the rank of *younker* (lieutenant) in the army of the Tsar.

There is the same trouble with the Finlander. He is a *mauvais sujet*, and must be treated accordingly. He refuses to adopt the customs and manners of the Russians in any form, and, therefore, it would be absurd to educate him. He has another lesson

to learn first, and good General Bobrikoff is busy teaching him.

When I was in Russia some of the universities were open, but not all. As a rule, more than one half were closed—"for repairs," I was told, with a twinkle of the eye. It is easy to understand that the educational establishments of Russia are in need of repairs—and alterations. But ask the students themselves about the closing of their universities, and you will hear another story.

It seems that some of the students began to think. That is the worst of education; it makes men think. They studied history—and they thought about it. They read the classic literature of the Greeks and Romans—and they thought about that. They dipped into philosophy, science, and sociology—and their thoughts became deeper than ever. Poring over their books, doubts began to obtrude themselves on their minds—doubts about the infallibility of the "God on Earth," doubts of the sanctity of Holy Russia.

Then, one day, a student whispered his doubts to his friend, and found that he, too, had his doubts. So they went to a third and whispered to him; and he whispered to another. At last, somebody whispered to the governor; and the university was closed, and a squadron of Cossacks was quartered in the town.

Then the governor held an inquiry, by order of the Tsar; and the more thoughtful students were brought before him. There were signs of unrest amongst their companions whilst the inquiry was in

progress; little groups of students discussing affairs on the outskirts of the town, a general, undefined air of excitement and anxiety amongst the townsmen. One day it became known that the thinkers were to be sent to Vladikavkas; and the groups of students united and formed themselves into a procession and marched through the streets. The squadron of Cossacks was ordered out. The officer in command gave the word to "go"; and the bloody work began. The university was closed "until further orders."

Of such a scene I was an eye-witness in Kazan, where the students assailed the university, which was closed because they were too poor to pay the fees. Thus it happens that a great many of the best brains of the Empire are now in Siberia or Vladikavkas. But they are not all there. Students, thinkers, and philosophers are still at large in Russia; and the Tsar knows it and trembles.

That is the reason why he has sealed the lips of Dr. Rastovbseff, and commanded him to discontinue his lectures on science. He was making known to the poor the inestimable blessings of medical science, and it is not good for the peasants to know such things. Therefore, in spite of the protests of thousands of medical men throughout Russia, he was suppressed. There was not a word of this in the Russian newspapers; it was not likely that there would be! But it is the truth nevertheless, and it happened as lately as January 1904.

Now what is the present state of affairs in Russia? Half her universities are closed on account of

disturbances. Scores of students are weekly exiled to Siberia; scores are imprisoned; and the ablest are those who have revolted against the system of the Tsar and the Synod. But what good will this do to the Government, to the Synod, to the Tsar? They are all one.

They cannot exile all the thinkers to Siberia. Even if they could, they cannot exile their thoughts. Though they place irons on their limbs they cannot fetter their understanding. For every head that the Tsar takes off, a hundred will spring up in defence of the liberties and rights of humanity.

It is fool's work to suppress all that is noblest and best in a great country, to bolster up a bogus divinity—especially when the divinity has cloven feet and does not chew the cud.

CHAPTER VI

THE ARISTOCRACY

In the preface to this book I stated that I have been the guest of princes and the bed-fellow of peasants throughout the Empire of Russia. There is no credit due to me for either experience. I went to Russia in search of information, and I sought it from every quarter. But I can truthfully say that I received no hospitality from princes or beggars that I did not return with interest. No man shall say that under cover of friendship I have abused his hospitality. I made few friends in Russia, and not a few enemies—but I paid my way. And in a country where the chief subject of conversation is money, I consider that I have bought my privilege to speak.

To speak alphabetically, I have visited every *Gubernii* from Archangel to Yaroslaff; and I have made the acquaintance of a certain number of the aristocracy in each government that I have visited. The girls I have always found well educated and versed in several languages. No matter how rich their parents may be, they always are acquainted with the simplest household duties. Many have a taste for music, art, or literature.

For the most part, the education of the children

of the aristocracy is entrusted to tutors in their own homes. These tutors are taken from the ranks of the poor students at the universities or are imported from France. I have seen as many as four tutors living in one house for the education of the children.

But the sons of the Russian aristocracy are of an altogether different stamp from their sisters. It is useless to disguise the fact, that all Russian men, from the Holy Tsar downwards, are, with few exceptions, moujiks. The hot Tartar blood is so close to the surface that the thin veneer of civilisation is unable to keep it in check. A moment of anger, a pair of flashing eyes, an extra glass of *stara vodka*, will suffice to reduce the polished Russian gentleman to the level of the moujik. I will give an example of it.

I was at a dinner-party one night in the Hôtel de France, St. Petersburg. The company was what might be called distinguished. Our host was an official of the War Office, whose father was a gentleman-in-waiting on the Tsar. There were also present a general of the army and several other officers—all noblemen.

The dinner was excellently cooked and well served, and the table was decorated with china, plate, and flowers. All went well until the arrival of the coffee at the end of the repast. Then the general, who was also a *kniaz* (prince), turned to me—he had drunk a great deal of champagne and his utterance was thick.

"Now, young man, show us how the soldiers march in your country."

I replied politely that I was not a soldier, and that I did not consider the dining-room a proper place for the display of martial skill.

He scowled at me savagely and growled like a bear, but he left me alone.

The rest of the party, who had been watching us intently in the hope of seeing me drawn into an undignified exhibition, pushed back their chairs and rose from the table. Then, as is the custom in Russia, they turned towards the icon in the corner of the room and began to cross themselves. I was the only one present who did not do so, and once again I unconsciously became the centre of attraction.

"Have you no icons in your country?" one of them asked brusquely.

"We have no icons," I replied; "but we have our God, and our honour."

They asked me no more unpleasant questions and harmony was restored. They filled up their glasses afresh and began to drink to each other. As each toast was honoured they dashed their glasses to the ground. Soon the whole floor was covered with broken glass; and the waiters came and went among the *débris* bringing more wine and more glasses. It is not necessary to scratch the Russian to find the Tartar—you only need to lubricate him. As the drinking became more fast and furious, and the glass crackled beneath their feet, I could see the moujik coming out in all of them.

Then, when they could drink no more, our host advanced unsteadily towards the table, and seizing the cloth at one end swept everything on the floor,

china, cut-glass vases, fruit dishes and plates, épergne and flowers, all broken and destroyed in a heap on the carpet. So have I seen the cloven-footed pigs gulp down the wash prepared for them and then take savage vengeance on the empty trough.

Shift the scene of this story from St. Petersburg to London; for Russian kniaz and officers substitute the names of British nobleman and high Staff officers, and it makes very amusing reading. It is only by travel in foreign countries that the Russian nobleman loses his moujik manners. The education he receives in Russia is not sufficient to eradicate the lower instincts in him.

He spends his life partly on his estates in the country and partly in St. Petersburg or Moscow. He is a bully by nature, and his servants and dependants stand in dread of him. His wife he treats as an inferior being, unless, indeed, she happens to be a woman of spirit, and refuses to occupy the position accorded to the wife of a Mussulman or Buddhist. In St. Petersburg he spends most of his time in gambling at his club, or in the society of the *demi-monde*.

He has a great opinion of himself, and the word "honour" is perpetually on his lips—but it does not go any further. He has, however, a certain *amour propre* which takes its place, and for which he is prepared to fight. As to honour, as the word is understood by a nation of shop-keepers as Great Britain is, he has none. His word is not his bond. He will lie to you on the smallest provocation; and his promises of to-day he will utterly repudiate to-morrow. He is the same man all over Russia, with

the exception of the Baltic Provinces and Poland. And in these parts the nobility are either of German or Polish descent.

The religion of the Russian aristocrat is of the same superstitious order as that of the moujik. The fear of the icon is over all the land. I have seen a Russian noble standing before the icon in his room bowing and crossing himself for three hours without cessation. What crime he had committed to merit such a severe penance I do not know; but it must have been of a peculiarly malignant nature. During the performance it almost seemed as though his arm must fall off from the elbow, so strenuous and rapid were his movements. At the end of his devotions his face looked as happy as possible. Doubtless all his sins were forgiven, and he was free to start afresh.

The sons of the aristocracy, as I have stated, are usually educated at home, until they are old enough to go to the university. There they seldom distinguish themselves as scholars, and it is rare to find scions of the noble Russian families amongst those who have graduated with honours.

After they leave the universities they either go into "crack" regiments or else loaf away the time at their homes or in St. Petersburg. You will never find the sons of the aristocracy employed in engineering works or any other craft; and, of course, trade of any kind is out of the question for them.

Like every other class in Russia, they are unscrupulous as to the means by which they obtain money. The London Stock Exchange and Wall Street, New

York, are innocents in comparison with the Russian aristocracy, who do not even trouble to issue a lying prospectus before they set about to rob the widow and orphan.

But there is more money to be made out of company promoting in London and New York than in Holy Russia, and, therefore, they are often to be found in the principal hotels of the two capitals with wonderful concessions to sell to the British or American public at absurdly reasonable figures. One has mineral oil springs on his estate; another extensive coal-fields. Kniaz Blowhisnoski has a concession from the Tsar to build a railway in the Ural Mountains; Baron Hurriupski has discovered a second Rand on his Siberian estate. And they have all come to London to give the British public an opportunity, which may not occur again, of making immense sums of money out of them!

This brings me to another element in the social life of the Russian Empire. I refer to the Russian adventuress. She is not necessarily of the aristocracy; but she is closely associated with it, and assumes names and titles with the full consent of the genuine owners. In Russia she is to be found in Kharkoff, Kieff, Moscow, Nijni Novgorod, St. Petersburg, and Warsaw, &c. She is always on friendly terms with the *Politzmaister* and *Pristav*, for it is through their goodwill that she is enabled to travel with valid passports and impressive titles. The arrangement is eminently satisfactory to both parties. She pays, and they provide the passports.

She is devoted to travelling, and makes many friends on the *Wagon Lit.* She dines with them on the train. The victim orders champagne, but the Countess will drink nothing but water; and therefore he is compelled to finish the bottle by himself. When he awakes in the morning he finds that the fair Countess left the train at midnight for some unknown destination. And then he suddenly recollects that she borrowed a hundred rouble note from him on some pretext or other. Of course, as she is a Countess, his lips are sealed.

She does not confine her travels to Russia. She will go to the Governor one day, and, with her most gracious smile, ask for a passport for Paris, or London, or Brussels. The Governor draws a long face, he is unwilling to lose so good a client as the Countess for a prolonged period; but he gives it to her at a special advanced rate for foreign passports, and expresses the hope that he will have the felicity of seeing her home again in due course.

So the Countess arrives in London with unexceptionable credentials, and takes up her abode in one of the large, fashionable hotels in the neighbourhood of the Strand. She spends money with no mean hand. The servants at the hotel receive liberal tips, and bow and scrape to her. It soon becomes known, and well known, that the Countess has large coal estates in the Don Cossacks, and has come to London to raise the necessary capital for working them. She flourishes the engineer's report on the property signed by a Notary Public of Holy Russia—for all of which she paid twenty-five roubles

—and with her *kuptchi kriepost* (deed of property) gets her to Mincing Lane, and seduces some poor, blithering idiot there to advance her £2000 on the strength of the documents and a few endearments. If he only knew it, those documents are as easily obtained in Russia as lice from the moujik, and the endearments don't require even that amount of hunting.

Then she is suddenly called away to Brussels, and the Mincing Lane idiot is left in possession of the deed of property and an I.O.U. for £2000, signed by the fair Countess' hand, as a memento of her visit to London.

Perhaps it was a little outside the purposes of this chapter to introduce the Russian adventuress; but if the exposure of her methods helps to clear the names and fame of the noble ladies in Russia whom she unblushingly impersonates in foreign countries, as in her own, then, at least, it will have served a good purpose.

CHAPTER VII

TRADERS

"THE holy St. John. Who'll buy the holy St. John!" The cry came from a moujik in the market-place of Yaroslaff, who was selling coloured prints of the Holy Mother and the Saints. He was only a common, ignorant moujik, but the nature of his wares made him a holy man amongst the buyers and sellers in the market. Partly on account of his holiness, and partly because the gaudy colours of the prints fascinated the eyes of the humble peasants of the Yaroslaff district, he was always sure of customers.

The market-place was crowded, and the vendors had ranged their wares in rows, and set them out to the best advantage. Here was a stall with red and black wooden bowls and platters and spoons. Next to it a fine assortment of children's toys. Remnants of coloured cotton and cloth textures were displayed on another. Rags of meat and sickly sweet-stuffs, bread, vegetables, and eatables of all kinds were exposed for sale. And at the corner was the holy man selling his pictures of the Mother of God and the Saints.

A man in a coarse sheepskin coat and long leather boots slouched up to him, and stood looking

admiringly at the rich blues and reds of St. John's apparel.

"How much?" he asked laconically.

"The holy Ivan, thirty-five kopeks."

"Impossible. I cannot pay so much."

The dealer in holy pictures crossed himself and began to roll up the St. John. It might mean that he would take no less, and was going to put it away from the gaze of the penurious; or, it might be that he intended to effect a sale, and was rolling the picture for the customer to take away with him.

"Eh, my brother," he said sadly, "times are hard with us all. The Holy Mother is punishing us because we are wicked. But since you say, my brother, that thirty-five kopeks are too much money you shall have it for thirty kopeks."

The man shook his head, but he still remained before the stall of the dealer in holy pictures.

"You don't know, my brother," the vendor continued, in the same tones of pious regret, "how evil the times are. I have seen some brothers go into the *kharchevna* and drink thirty glasses of tea and ten glasses of *vodka*, and they will go home and not so much as bend their knees to the Holy Mother. But I sold one of them a St. Peter yesterday and he is a different man. It is not for the money only that I sell the holy saints, it is for the good that they will do." He unrolled the picture and held it before the eyes of the man.

"See, my brother, see the holy St. John! You can almost hear him cry from the Wilderness!

You shall have it for twenty kopeks. You shall not go away without it, as I fear for your salvation."

But still the would-be purchaser held back; he might buy his salvation for less than twenty kopeks if he were patient. It was evident to the vendor of holy pictures that he must change his tactics.

"What is your name, brother?" he asked.

"Ivan Ilyitchovitch."

"Is it possible that your father's name was Ilyitch? That also was my father's name, who is now in heaven among the angels. You shall have the holy St. John for ten kopeks!"

And rolling up the picture once more he thrust it into the hands of Ivan Ilyitchovitch, receiving ten kopeks in exchange. Whilst he was stowing away the money in the little canvas bag which he wore round his neck I went up to Ivan Ilyitchovtich.

"Well, brother, are you satisfied with your picture?" I asked.

The man looked at me dreamily, his thoughts intent on the holy St. John.

"Yes; but it was five kopeks too much."

This is a humble example of the manner of trading throughout Russia. In the big establishments of St. Petersburg or Moscow it is the same as in the market-place of Yaroslaff—there will be an attempt made to cheat the customer to begin with, and a gradual "climb down" on the part of the merchant until a reasonable figure is reached.

It is a dangerous custom to look into shop windows if you do not intend to buy, for just within the door sits a buxom woman waiting, like

some large spider for flies to become entangled in her web. The unwary loiterer is suddenly seized upon and dragged within the door, and when he emerges again he generally carries a parcel under his arm.

When I was in Ekaterinoslaff I wanted to buy a *polshupka*, a fur coat made from a sheepskin, so I went to the best fur store in the town to procure it. There was an old lady sitting behind the counter, rolled up in a shawl and warming her hands at the stove. The shawl enveloped her whole head, and only her eyes were visible between the folds of it. There was an expensive icon of the Boje Matery in the corner, and the little lamp burnt in front of it. The remainder of the wall space was occupied by fur coats of every description hanging on pegs.

Besides the old lady there was a boy in the shop and an intelligent-looking girl of seventeen or so, who came towards me and asked what I wanted. I answered her in French, for I took it into my head to leave the Russian language alone for the purposes of the business which I had come to transact.

The girl gave me to understand that she could not speak French. I, in my turn, displayed an absolute ignorance of Russian. With a wave of the hand in the direction of the goods on the walls she indicated that I should point out to her what I wanted. The old lady, seeing the difficulties of the situation, hit upon a bright idea. She despatched the boy to a neighbouring iron foundry, where, she knew, there were several foreign engineers, with instructions to bring back an interpreter.

The lad returned in five minutes with a Belgian engineer. His French was very shaky and his knowledge of Russian not much better, but he was all smiles, and most willing to do his little best to help us out of our difficulties. I explained my wants to the engineer, and as soon as the old lady heard the word *polshupka*—

"So, so, your High-born Excellency!" she exclaimed, and began to hunt among the coats on the wall.

They are very liberal with their titles in Russia when there is likely to be money in them. You can be a baron for a gratuity of twenty-five kopeks, and a rouble will certainly entitle you to the honour of *veliki kniaz*. The American heiress should take her poor old father to Russia, where for a very small consideration she can obtain titles both for herself and him without the painful necessity of marrying herself to a peer of the realm.

But to return to the old lady in the shawl. With a long stick she took down several coats from the wall and handed them to me to try on. Then I heard her say quietly to the girl, "Say twenty-five roubles more." And with that she resumed her seat by the stove.

I found a coat to my liking and fit, and I asked the price through the interpreter.

The girl consulted the woman, and I could see that she was expostulating with her for the extortionate figure proposed.

"Oh, that is nothing to a rich Frenchman!" the old lady replied tartly.

I laughed to myself; and when the girl informed

me, with some diffidence, that the price of the coat was forty-five roubles, I deducted in my mind the twenty-five which the old lady had added and a further 20 per cent. for making me a Frenchman.

"I will give fifteen roubles," I said to the engineer.

The engineer looked at me with a quiet grin, and winked. Then he translated my offer to the old lady.

The effect was electrical. She began crossing herself violently; the shawl fell from her head and shoulders, and she spluttered unintelligible words to the Belgian, which he, poor soul, endeavoured unsuccessfully to translate to me. She kept protesting that she had sold a similar coat to a baron only the day before for forty-five roubles. Seeing that the interpreter was unable to do full justice to her cause she approached me in person, and endeavoured by shouting in my ear to make me understand the drift of her tirade.

The girl had been watching the scene quietly. I fancy she guessed that I could understand more than I pretended of the Russian language. Presently she came up and suggested, through the interpreter, that a *polshubka* would make people think that I was a Russian, and therefore a different kind of coat would be preferable for me.

I answered that I was going to Moscow, and that I did not want people to think that I was a Frenchman. She smiled, but said nothing.

Finally the old lady took my fifteen roubles and I took the *polshubka*.

The same evening, whilst I was at my tea in the hotel, the porter came in and said that there was a young girl downstairs who wanted to see me. I told him to show her in. He went down again, leaving the door open behind him; and presently I heard them coming up the stairs together. The girl was speaking, and I recognised her voice at once.

"How do you make the Bareen understand?" she asked. "Do you speak French to him?"

"Why should I speak French?" I heard the porter answer. "The Bareen is an Englishman, and speaks Russian as well as you do."

Then the door was pushed wide open and she came in smiling, but evidently in some confusion. She began to excuse herself for the want of ceremony of her visit. I reassured her, and told her to be seated.

"I knew you could speak our language, Bareen," she said. "When the old lady told me to ask forty-five roubles for the *polshubka* I saw that you understood. I did not want to ask so much; the coat cost her less than eight roubles."

So this girl had come to me to apologise for the attempted extortion of her employer. I liked her for that, though perhaps she was not acting very loyally to her mistress.

"If I had been a Russian," I said, "I should have offered ten roubles."

"And you would have got the coat," she confessed readily.

"Well, in my country we wish the merchant to

live, and in return he tells us the lowest price that he will take. It is simpler and saves time."

This was evidently to her a new light on commercial ethics; for she took some moments to consider the matter.

"And so you came to tell me that you are sorry your employer tried to impose upon me?" I asked.

"Yes, that was one reason why I came," she said, with a return to the confusion which she had shown on her entry.

"And what was the other reason?"

"I thought perhaps, Bareen, that you could tell me something of the world outside of Russia. How I should like to see the world!"

I had been merely amused at the girl before, I was interested in her now. Here was another thinker who had, so far, escaped Siberia.

"Tell me about yourself first," I said.

She told me her little history. She was an orphan, and the widow who kept the fur store had adopted her, and treated her as her own child. I asked her whether she ever read books.

"I read sometimes when my guardian cannot see me," she confessed. "And after I have been reading I often want to run away and go out into the world, and see what it is all like. We, Russians, are a stupid race, I know; there is nothing but the Church and the cupolas before our eyes, and they only make us more stupid and blind."

I could only agree with her; but I cautioned her against running away from her guardian.

"If you had been a boy," I said, "I would have encouraged you to go, and I might have been able to help you. But since you are not——"

I gave her what, I hope, was excellent advice, and I told her something of the great world which she was so anxious to see; not forgetting to point out the pitfalls and snares which are everywhere set for the feet of the unwary.

I sometimes wonder what has happened to the little thinker of Ekaterinoslaff.

CHAPTER VIII

THE MOUJIK

In a previous chapter I mentioned that all men in Russia, from the highest to the lowest, are moujiks. That is a view of the social condition of the Empire of the Tsar which is possibly not in accord with the ideas of the aristocracy of that country. Let them controvert it if they can. Meanwhile we will pass on to the class whose generic name I have applied, or misapplied, to the whole race.

He is known by various names, according to his locality; but "Chacholl," "Katchap," or "Strugovtchik"—all are moujiks.

His ignorance is colossal; his patience is infinite; his stupidity is profound; and he possesses a humour of his own. Beneath these qualities there is a smouldering fire, which occasionally breaks out, and is at once suppressed by order of the Tsar; but it is never altogether extinguished, and some day it will get beyond control.

He resembles a badly-ventilated haystack—cumbersome, stolid, imperturbable; but on fire within, from over-pressure and want of air. When he is sober he cares nothing what you call him, or what you do to him. When he is drunk, the fire

is apt to break through and show itself—and it generally damages something.

Here is an episode that I witnessed in Tiflis; it strikes the key-note of the moujik character. In a *traktir* (tea-shop and restaurant) in Tiflis two moujiks sat at a table and called for *vodka*. There was nothing in the appearance of either of them to lift them above their class or to degrade them beneath it. They were just two heavy, patient moujiks.

"Eh, Petrushka, never, never could I believe it of thee. Thou hast done me a great wrong. And I know well that thou hast made dirt of me, for Maximoff told me all. Why did'st thou serve me thus? Oï, oï! one would think that thou should'st be my greatest friend, after all I have done for thee these six years past."

"I tell thee, as I have told thee before, it is nothing but a lie. That Maximoff is a dog's son," Petrus retorted hotly. "Why should'st thou take his word before mine? Soinka will tell thee that I speak the truth."

He got up from his seat and crossed himself twice, and sat down again. I could see trouble brewing in Petrus' face. He remained silent for some minutes, staring vacantly at the table before him. Then he broke out again.

"Thou knowest, Mikhalka, that to this day I would give my life for thee; and yet thou wilt believe that dog's son, Maximoff, before me! Before me!"

He struck his fist on his chest repeatedly,

reiterating the words, "before me," at every blow. Then he fell to abuse of Maximoff and his fathers for three generations. And, at last, the smouldering fire within him, fanned by the gusts of his wrath, broke into flame.

"Well, thou knowest what a friend I am to thee!" he exclaimed. And snatching a knife from his pocket, he jerked the long blade open and drove it into his chest. His arms dropped to his sides, leaving the knife buried to the hilt between his ribs.

"See how I love thee—see!—see!—see!"

The *traktir* was almost empty. Shouting to the waiter I went across to the body of Petrus, which had fallen across the chair on to the floor. The fall had driven the knife further in, and the left lung was pierced through and through. There was no earthly help for him.

And now the *traktir* rapidly filled with people of all sorts. They mobbed the unfortunate Mikhael, thinking that he had killed his friend. In the scuffle the table and the samovar were overturned, and it was with difficulty that I succeeded in rescuing Mikhael from their hands.

The cry of "Gorodovoy!" echoed through the streets, and in a few minutes the police arrived and restored order.

It was two hours before they took the body of Petrus to the mortuary—he had been dead for more than an hour. Mikhael they took to the police station. His eyes were red and swollen from crying over his friend's death; but he would say no word one way or the other to the questions of the police.

The next morning I attended at the examining court, and on my evidence Mikhael was set free. I never saw a man so changed as he was in that one night, his hair had turned completely gray.

The patience of the moujik is almost incredible. Centuries of oppression and injustice have tempered his nature to stolid forbearance. Less than half a century ago he was a serf. Then Alexander II. made him a free man in name; but he omitted to teach him what freedom means, and the moujik has never been able to find out for himself. But, "it doesn't matter—it doesn't matter"—the eternal cry in Russia. "It doesn't matter—it is all the same."

The whole land is full of Jobs who do not curse the stars and the day they were born, nor have they comforters. But there is the *Starosta* to tell them to "move on" some thousands of miles, to the land of promise which the holy Tsar and the missionary have spied out for them in the East. And they go without a murmur.

The moujik is always at peace with all the world, in so far as he knows it.

I once asked one if he had ever heard of London.

"No," he said; "I can hardly conceive another world when one sees the size of our holy Russia."

"But you believe in the existence of St. Petersburg and Moscow?"

"Of course!" he exclaimed, with kindling eyes. "Is not Moscow the city where the Holy Mother rests, and has built forty times forty churches for her resting-place?"

And he uplifted his voice and began to sing :

"Ach Moskva! Moskva! Moskva!
Zolotaya Goroda."

A song dear to all Russian hearts.

Of St. Petersburg he said : "Ah, if I can only live to walk on the holy earth where our Tsar, the 'God on Earth' walks, I shall die happy."

The moujik is a very stupid fellow; but even in his stupidity there is a rough humour, and at times he is very merry. One can never feel dull with him.

In the Donetz district I called on a large coal-mine proprietor. He showed me over his works, and we arrived at the mouth of a shaft some 150 ft. in depth. There were two moujiks at the mouth of the shaft. One had just taken his seat in the basket to be lowered down the shaft, the other stood at the crank to let him down.

"Be careful," says the man at the wheel, leaning over the mouth of the shaft and peering down at his companion fifty feet below him; "be careful that you don't fall and get killed!"

"All right!" the other sings out from the depths, "I have not yet eaten my *kasha*, and I will not let the Holy Mother call me until I have dined."

There is no particular point in this story, and the wit of the moujik's rejoinder is, perhaps, not very well turned; but it is a fair specimen of the cold-blooded humour of his class.

It is as a family man that the moujik shows to the best advantage. He is a good husband and father, and his mother he always places before himself. He brings his wages home with him; and on

market days he will generally come back with something for his wife and children—tawdry jewellery or wooden toys. He beats his wife once a week, to keep her in health. In the moujik's *ménage* the weekly thrashing is the equivalent to winding the clocks in more enlightened establishments. If he neglects the operation, he finds that his wife gets "run down" and in need of a stimulus; and she works better when she is kept regularly "wound up." At other times he is extravagant of his endearments, and will hug her, like a bear, in public.

The savage moujik knows nothing of our civilised ways. Ask him what fashion is, and he will answer: "My wife in her *yupka*, and my mother with her gray hair, and my little babies on the oven asleep."

He never wishes for anything nor frets for what might have been. He has no ambitions beyond his daily needs. If he has enough, he has it; if not, it doesn't matter. He is perfectly satisfied with himself, and riches for him are a sufficiency of black bread and salted herrings and a little *vodka*. If he can get it he will soak himself in *vodka*; but he is quite content with his *stakan* of tea if he cannot. He will steal when there is no chance of detection, and lie as a matter of course. And he has a simple faith in the icon for the remission of sins, and in the "God on Earth" for his destiny.

CHAPTER IX

THE MISSIONARY

THAT the Holy Russian Church should send missionaries to the "poor benighted heathen" beyond the pale of the far-reaching dominions of the Tsar is an idea that should bring a blush to the striped coat of the hyena. Is there not darkness enough in Russia for all her holy men that they seek it elsewhere? Did Stanley in "Darkest Africa" ever enter gloom as impenetrable as the cloud of ignorance and hypocrisy that overshadows the kingdom of the "God on Earth?"

The plague of Darkness which Moses called down upon Pharoah and the Egyptians was rolled aside when the heart of the monarch was softened. But it was not dispersed. It hovered over the world looking for a new home. The countries of Europe harboured it in turn. Spain gave it a long lease. France, Italy, England, and Germany invited it to spend a few centuries with them. Some of them retain remnants of it to this day, but no country would give it a permanent home. The cloud drifted eastwards, and at last came to Russia. One, Romanoff, seeing it, took pity upon it, because it was homeless and driven from place to place. Out of his great charity he invited it to stay in Russia

for ever; and the cloud of darkness sat down upon Russia and waxed denser than ever, for nobody came to disturb it. It is there to this day, but it never is able to soften the heart of a Romanoff.

From under the cloud the Russian missionaries emerge and go out into the brighter world, as commanded by the Holy Synod.

With his little sack across his shoulders and his cassock to his heels and his long-flowing hair crowned with a brimless stove-pipe hat he marches forth, by order of the Tsar, to preach the gospel of the "God on Earth" to nations that know Him not, but which shall know Him soon.

Now, mark him in his holy offices, and learn from him the gospel of the "God on Earth." Not from the house-tops does he proclaim the tidings of joy, but quietly and silently he gets to work, seeking by mysterious rites to raise the heathen's curiosity.

From his little sack he draws forth a smoking censer and swings it by the gilded chains, chanting a weird incantation. The gaping natives stand around in awe and wonder. It is possible that they have seen a missionary before, but never one after this kind. The air of mysticism which pervades his sacred rites and the grotesqueness of his garb impress them forcibly. Half fearful they approach him, and are received with fair words. Thus he gains their confidence and prepares the way for many things.

The missionary spends much time within his house, and there he writes long letters—to his wife at home? Oh, dear, no! They are addressed

to St. Petersburg. Then they will contain lists of his converts to the Holy Church? I do not think so. But there is probably much useful information in them of another kind, for he is an observant man. There will be a description of the country, possibly a rough map; an account of the inhabitants and their disposition, whether they are warlike or peaceably inclined; the fortified towns and villages he will mention in passing; the numbers and nationality of any foreigners in the district, and their standing with the natives and government; he may even refer to the religion of the inhabitants; but since they soon will all be of the Holy Russian Church that is not of much importance.

The missionary gives the information, the Tsar does the rest. And the world sees the outcome of it all, in the shape of Russian colonies in Manchuria and China.

It was the missionaries who discovered that this was a land flowing with milk and honey; hence the great Trans-Siberian Railway with its thousands of miles of steel rails. It was a religious mission that penetrated to Lhassa, in Thibet, a short time ago, which seems to have left some of its members behind it in the sacred city of the Lamas; hence the lengthy correspondence with Lord Lansdowne and a British-Indian expedition to the heart of Thibet.

The Russian missionary, in fact, has only one object in view—to serve his God in the *Tsarskoi Selo*. He is a spy pure and simple. But the natives of the countries to which he is sent do not discover this fact until the eleventh hour.

How should they?

They cannot see the maps hidden beneath his cassock, nor the drawings of their fortified places. They cannot see that the cross which he wears conceals a sword. They know nothing of the geometrical instruments beneath the cover of his Bible; and if they knew they would not understand.

Thus Russia enlarges her borders, and the Tsar and the Metropolitan shriek the name of Christ to pacify the nations of the earth; and the Neva and the Volga are filled to the brim with Christ's tears. The "God on Earth" cries "Peace!" and summons all nations to his congress of goodwill. But there is no peace. And the man of small understanding asks: "How shall there be peace and goodwill on earth, whilst the 'God on Earth' violates his promises and breaks faith with the nations?"

CHAPTER X

THE SETTLEMENT

A DAY arrives when the Russian missionary writes to the Synod in St. Petersburg that he has made the place ready for occupancy.

Now the Tsar has a system by which he can populate a country to order. It is a beautiful and simple system, and yet no other country in the world possesses it. The Tsar issues his orders to the Governors of certain *Guberniis.* The Governors pass them on to the *Politzmaisters.* The *Politzmaisters* communicate with the *Pristaves.* The *Pristaves* summon the *Uryadniks.* The *Uryadnik* sets out for certain villages, where poverty and want are the prevailing characteristics, and pays a house to house visitation.

He enters the house of a poor moujik, crosses himself to the icon, and says "God is good." The members of the household who are present return his salutation; and the children, terrified at the uniform and sword of the *Uryadnik,* rush for protection to their mother's skirts.

It is probable that only the old man and his wife and the grandchildren are present, and the *Uryadnik,* who is anxious to ascertain the full strength of the

family, inquires after the health of the absent members.

The old man, in a meek voice, tells him that Ivanka is working in the coalfields; Yurka is hired out as a farm labourer; but his eldest son can get no work to do. The times are hard, and he will be thankful when the Holy Mother calls him up to Herself, as he is no longer useful to the world.

Here the *Uryadnik* sees his opening. He has a story to tell of comfort and hope. The *Starosta*, he says, has heard of their poverty and trouble, and knows that the land is very poor. So he brought the sad state of affairs in the district to the notice of the Governor, and the Governor communicated with the "Little Father." The "Little Father" has found a land flowing with milk and honey, and he has arranged for all the poor people in the district to be transported to the mellifluous country, so that their troubles are ended at last.

The *Uryadnik* goes on to tell them what a fine country it is to which they are going. How twice a day a roasted ox walks round in company with several smoked pigs—knives and forks are sticking in their loins, and whoever wishes can help himself to his heart's content. And there is land for all, *sasjens* and *sasjens* of it, and all free! And they are to cultivate it and become rich.

And the eyes of the old moujik sparkle through the mist of rheum, and the women listen open-mouthed to the description of the wonderful place which the "Little Father" has provided for them.

They long to leave behind them the poverty-stricken country and enter upon this land of promise.

But how are they to get there?

The old man tells the *Uryadnik* that his son Ivanka has a mining concession in the coalfields of the Donetz basin; that he has to give to the owner of the land one half of all that he takes out of the ground. Well, Ivanka worked night and day for five months, and all he was able to make was twenty-six roubles for himself. On those twenty-six roubles they still live; but the old man thinks there is only a rouble or two left. How can he undertake the journey with his family since he has no money?

"Well, well," says the *Uryadnik*, "if you have no money we must see what the Holy Mother will do in the matter."

He knows that the *Starosta* is instructed to furnish those who have no money with third-class tickets. So it is all arranged, and the *Uryadnik* takes his departure, after giving instructions as to the day and hour they are to be at the railway station.

And now they must pack their sacks with what few belongings they possess, and start for the railway-station. The man has only the *shinell* and pair of trousers that he is wearing, which his wife made for him from coarse sacking. He has but few things to put into his sack. The woman also wears a *shinell* with a leather belt round her waist and a *yupka*. When she straps on her belt her bosom acts as a general storehouse. Sometimes she keeps her child there, sometimes a loaf of bread, or a

bottle of *vodka*, and the knives and platters of the household. Then she is ready to start.

They trail along the roads towards the railway, a dismal procession of dirt and poverty. On the way they fall in with other parties and families, all bound for the railway. For the *Uryadniks* have been busy all over the country-side, and have raised colonists far in excess of the numbers ordered by the Starosta. But they will all go to the new colony in Manchuria for the Russification of the country.

They are herded together into trucks like cattle; and beast-like they know not whither they are going or what their fate will be. They only know that there can be no poorer and more desolate spot on earth than the homes they are quitting for ever. The icon is in the sack, and the "God on Earth" directs their steps—and they have faith in both, and hope for the future that is before them; and all that they have to love goes with them.

These poor colonists are generally drawn from South Russia, Donetz District, Don Cossack Settlement, &c., starting from Kharkoff, embracing Ekaterinoslaff, and as far as Vladikavkas.

About three years ago I was at the railway-station at Ekaterinoslaff with a friend, an Englishman, who had come from Kharkoff to see me. He was travelling in Russia for a couple of months, and was anxious to see as much of the country as possible in the time.

I left my friend drinking his glass of tea in the first-class portion of the station and went to see

what was going on in the third-class. I soon returned to him, and told him if he wanted to see something of Russian life he had better drink up his tea and come with me. Then I took him to the third-class station.

It is a large hall, with wooden benches round the walls. The whole building was densely packed with humanity of all ages, and in every degree of filth, discomfort, and misery. There were over one hundred families of them lying on the bare floor, or huddling together on their sacks, or on the top of one another. They were colonists waiting for their train.

There were old men leaning painfully on their elbows with long-suffering faces, wondering, perhaps, whether there may not be a better and a kinder world than theirs. There were women suckling their little ones, poor, feeble mites who had not yet begun to suffer, and were happy in the knowledge that they had something to draw on, and cared for nothing else. There were children more advanced in years, who whimpered pitifully or scratched their tormented bodies with convulsive fingers.

So thick upon the ground were they that it would scarcely have been possible to walk among them without treading on their limbs or heads. Some slept uneasily; others looked with wistful eyes at the last crust of black bread which some more fortunate neighbour devoured greedily. An old crazy woman, with dishevelled hair and mumbling gums, crooned a weird song to herself, rocking from side to side.

I have never seen humanity in a guise so abjectly miserable and revolting.

My friend gasped at the sight of them.

"What are they? And what are they doing here? Is it possible that they are human?"

At the word "human" my heart sank within me.

"Yes," I answered, "just as human as you or I. They never asked to come into the world, and this is how it treats them. They are the employees of the firm of Nero, Herod, and Co."

"What company is that?"

I pointed to the icon with its little lamp.

"That is their trade-mark," I said. "Nero is the Tsar and Herod is the Procurator. It is an old-established firm."

"I don't care if we miss our train," said my friend, "I shall stay here until you have told me all about these people."

For an Englishman deliberately to miss his train was a great concession to philanthropy. And so I told him all I knew of them.

The *gorodovoy* on the platform outside passed and repassed the entrance to the hall with steady persistency. Every time he passed he looked at us invitingly, as though he would say:

"You might take pity on me, too, for the value of a *stakan* of *vodka*."

I gave him twenty-five kopeks to leave us undisturbed, and began to question some of the men, translating their replies for the benefit of my friend.

"Well, brothers, where do you all come from?"

A man put himself forward as spokesman.

"From the Don Cossacks district, Bareen."

"And where are you going?"

"To some district in Manchuria; we do not know the name of it."

"And how long have you been on the road?"

"This is the fourth day, Bareen."

"Four days from the Don Cossacks district to Ekaterinoslaff!" I exclaimed. "Why, I went to Yusoffka yesterday and back again to-day!"

"Yusoffka is in Don Cossacks district, a few hours journey by train from Ekaterinoslaff."

At the mention of Yusoffka a dozen people jumped up from the floor crying: "That is our town!"

We know that it is not far," said the spokesman, "but yesterday morning we were told to change our train, and no other has come for us yet."

"So you have been here like this since yesterday morning?" I said, indicating with a wave of the arm the appalling condition of the people around us.

"Yes, Bareen; we may leave sometime to day."

"Who told you so?"

"The *gorodovoy*."

Whilst I was talking to them an official in a red pancake-shaped cap came up. He was the station-master, and, therefore, a man of great authority. An old man with a long, white beard scrambled to his feet and approached him humbly.

"Surely, Bareen, it is not possible that the Holy Mother will let us starve to death before the train comes to take us on?" he pleaded. "Let us go back to our homes where we may get food, and wait

for a through train. We shall die if we are left here."

The station-master drew himself up, and assumed an air of outraged authority.

"Keep silence, thou diseased dog!" he shouted at the venerable moujik. "What do you mean by speaking to me? To hell with you! You dog's son!"

He used many other expressions which are quite unprintable, though common on the lips of all classes in Russia.

The old man sank back abashed. But, I confess, it was with difficulty that I could restrain myself. I looked at my English friend, I could see the glint of suppressed fury in his eyes—and he had not understood the words which the station-master had used. I thought it better not to translate them to him.

But I was not going to let the station-master escape. I intercepted him as he was leaving the hall, and there I questioned him on the rules of etiquette to third-class passengers and old men.

He looked me up and down critically—I had nothing to fear from him in point of size and weight, and he recognised the fact.

My friend, seeing the threatening aspect of affairs, came to my side.

I had a few more words to say to the station-master of a denunciatory character; and then I produced from my pocket a letter of introduction to the Governor-General of Kieff, and pointed to the address.

"That is to whom I am going, my friend," I said,

"and I shall take the opportunity of acquainting him with this affair."

The man's face fell at once.

"I admit I was a little hasty," he said. "Is that enough?"

"By no means," I answered. "You have insulted and outraged an old man, and therefore you will apologise to him."

It was a severe trial to his *amour propre*, and he took some minutes to think over it. Perhaps he thought that we would take our departure and not molest him further. But seeing that we still remained with the unfortunate colonists he presently came back, and going up to the old man kissed him on both cheeks and asked his forgiveness. The old man thought that he must be crazy, and began to cross himself vigorously.

The station-master having done penance as prescribed by his self-appointed confessor, called me outside.

"You will not now mention the affair to the Governor of Keiff?" he whined.

I assured him that I would not, and he returned to his office satisfied.

When we returned to the hall, for my friend had accompanied me outside with the station-master, the poor people fell upon us and began kissing our hands and, I regret to say, even our feet, thinking that we were great officials in disguise. ..

Then it occurred to the practical mind of my friend that kisses would not fill empty stomachs. So we chartered a sleigh and drove into the town.

We bought up all the bread and hams in Ekaterinoslaff. I remember there were fourteen sacks of white bread. Some blankets and shawls we also managed to procure, and a few bottles of *vodka*.

And when, at last, our train arrived, we were speeded on our journey with the blessings of those unhappy colonists, delivered from their knees.

For some minutes after the train had left the station we were both silent.

"Well, what are you so quiet about?" I asked at last.

"I was thinking," he answered laconically, and then after an interval—"I did not know that such treatment of the human race was possible; I have learnt something."

He drew his travelling rug round him and began to smoke. I could read his thoughts through the mist that veiled his eyes. Dear, great soul of his! I could well understand what his feelings were, and I did not disturb his thoughts until the train came to a standstill at our station.

Such is the Tsar's patent system for populating provinces. As I have said before, Nero, Herod, and Co. have the sole right to the patent. They have employed it successfully at Stambov, Irkutsk, Tomsk, Vladivostock, Port Arthur, Dalni, Nieu Chwang, Mukden, and Harbin; and though the firm have infringed the rights of many other nations in the exercise of their patent, yet Japan is the only one who has had the courage to cry "Stop!"

CHAPTER XI

SCIENCE

In telling the naked truth about Russia I am not actuated by any feeling of animosity against her people. My endeavour has been to show that the failings in the national character are due entirely to the system of government under which Russia labours.

In my travels through Russia I have met in every Government men not less enlightened, unselfish, and noble than the best of the civilised world.

The learned man, the thinker, the philanthropist, the theologist, of Russia is never a surface man, for three reasons. First, because no man who is not really in earnest would devote his life to the study of sciences so dangerous to his liberty. Secondly, because the material for investigation, afforded by the appalling condition of his own country, is so vast that he cannot explore it in a lifetime of hard work. Thirdly, because there are no means to his hand for the study of any of these sciences, and no teachers of them. In civilised countries we can be spoon-fed on all the sciences, if we desire it; but in Russia a man must discover them for himself.

The thinker must never let his thoughts find an outlet beyond his own door; hence he is a very quiet

man with little to say. But nevertheless the police have a strict eye on him.

Once I had an opportunity of questioning a high official, in whose house I was a guest, on the subject. I asked him why the police should trouble themselves so much on account of men who were known to be as single-minded as they were learned.

At first he was not inclined to answer me, but knowing me well he replied at last :

" My friend, we are obliged to do our duty, and to carry out the instructions we receive."

He then went on to tell me of the case of a man he had known for twenty years. He was a botanist, and devoted his whole life to the study of that science. He was also a man of tender heart and devoted to children. But one day he disappeared from the town and he had not since been heard of.

The official paused in his narrative, and though that might well have been the end of it I could see that he had something more to say.

" I understand that when you leave us you are going to Vladikavkas," he continued presently ; " and if that is so, I am sure you could find him there. The Government does not send prisoners to Siberia now."

Under the promise of secrecy he gave me his name. But when I arrived at a particular town in Vladikavkas three months later, I found that the old botanist had been dead for two years.

What his crime was no one knows. No record is to be found of his trial or sentence in any of the

Tsar's books. He was spirited away to Vladikavkas, and died there. "The rest is silence."

The uncertainty of liberty from day to day—which arrests such as the foregoing create in the minds of men in Russia who wear civilian's clothes—has left its stamp on the faces of the people. They are morose and suspicious in expression, and usually quite devoid of mirth.

The civilian will always give a wide berth to the uniformed official. If he is on the pathway he will move into the middle of the road to let the *Uryadnik* pass. He avoids him whenever he can lest he should one day fall into the clutches of the law, and be no more heard of in his home.

The practical sciences in Russia are almost neglected. On her railways, in her manufactories and laboratories, the engineers and experts are almost without exception foreigners. France, Belgium, England, and America supply nearly all the brains for her great industries. The reasons for this are not far to seek. The Universities and Polytechnics where young Russia ought to acquire proficiency in the sciences, are perpetually being closed, because the students are supposed to be disaffected towards the Government. Under these circumstances continuity of scientific training is an impossibility. In cities such as St. Petersburg, Moscow, Kharkoff, Odessa, Kazan, or Riga, where the educational establishments are kept open and constantly guarded by soldiers and police, it is possible that training in the practical sciences may be obtained, but the students who attend at these institutions are nearly all the

sons of rich men, who do not adopt any profession when they leave the universities. The military schools are the only technical educational establishments which are always in full swing.

One of the most deplorable results of the constant interruption and neglect of scientific training is to be found in the ignorance of the medical profession in Russia. The very best doctors know about as much of surgery and medicine as an Edinburgh medical student who has passed the first examination. It can be imagined then how much the Russian medical student knows of "Materia Medica" or practical surgery, not to mention the knowledge of diagnosis of any particular ailment.

And yet, only the other day—11th February, 1904—the Tsar issued a special *ukase* that all the medical students at the universities were to receive their diplomas as doctors of medicine *without any examination whatever!* They are being sent to the war to attend to the sick and wounded.

It is possible that those doctors of medicine will be as harmless to the Tsar and his Government in Korea or Manchuria as they would be in Siberia or Vladikavkas, whither he delights to send medical students; but what about the army? Will they be harmless to that, too?

That a monarch can make a knight, or a baron, or even a duke from a common man there is no doubt; but he cannot make him a gentleman. He may create a viscount, but he cannot make him a violinist. He may raise up a prince, but he cannot make him a physician. Yet the "God on Earth," by

his holy will and *ukase* makes a boy who hardly knows the names of physiology or botany a full-fledged doctor of medicine!

Therefore, let the "slackers" of the University of Edinburgh rejoice, and the students of Harvard and John Hopkins University be glad! No more need they fear the terrors of the examination room, nor await with quaking hearts the verdict of the examiners. They have but to go to Holy Russia and the Tsar will create them doctors of medicine.

CHAPTER XII

LITERATURE AND THE CENSOR

THERE is no lack of printed matter in Russia. Nearly every town of fifteen thousand inhabitants and upwards has its newspaper. There are daily papers, weekly papers, and monthly magazines. They are published in various languages, according to the locality, in Russian, German, and even in Yiddish and many other dialects, excepting, of course, in the Polish language, which is prohibited. But at the bottom of the front page of every publication there are two words printed, "Dozvoleno Tchensuroyu," which is by interpretation, "With the permission of the Censor." No editor would dare to issue his paper without those words upon the front page.

As with the newspapers so it is with all books. The pious divine of the Greek Church who writes a commentary in the most orthodox fashion must see that the title-page of his book is adorned with the mystic words Even the one-syllable spelling-book must have them, though they are too long for the reader's intelligence.

The censorship in Russia has a Government office to itself; and it is the most expensive of all the Government offices. Each Gubernii has its head

censor and beneath him a host of under-censors, all of whom can presumably read and write. Then, there are censors for all the foreign languages and for the foreign press. Generally speaking the duties of the press censors are as follows:

(1) To see that no news shall be printed, from foreign countries especially, dealing with certain political views.

(2) That no newspaper shall copy from the foreign press any matter that would tend to the enlightenment of the nation.

(3) That no publication shall be copied from any country having a Constitutional Government or a Republic.

(4) That all foreign newspapers entering Russia shall have articles and paragraphs dealing with Russia blocked out with ink.

The censorship of books and other publications is equally arbitrary and oppressive. That blood-thirsty ruffian, Nicholas I., was responsible for many of the more stringent rules of censorship in his efforts to keep Western ideas out of Russia. Had he confined himself to strangling literature and the press his name would have gone down to history as the gentlest of Tsars. But it was Nicholas I. who ordered the massacre of the Poles, and the ruthless destruction of Roman Catholics and Jews, his soldiers sparing neither women nor children from dishonour and death. It was Nicholas I. who tortured the Jewish children to convert them to the Holy Church of Russia. It was Nicholas I. whose butcher's bill amounted to over 200,000 souls.

But even in Russia ideas have advanced a little in the half-century which separates Nicholas I. from Nicholas II., though this advance cannot be attributed to any relaxation of the censorship. But in spite of the censorship the press and literature of the civilised world have invaded the dominions of the Tsar, and brought a little light beneath the official cloud of darkness.

This flicker of light has been admitted through the old channel of official corruption—a strait through which any barque may pass on payment. A rouble on either eye and a rouble across the mouth will effectually prevent the Russian official from seeing or speaking. The traveller in revolutionary literature from the West knows the formula well. What is more, there are officers stationed on the lines of the frontier who will even help the tired traveller with his contraband of forbidden fruit; but that costs more. The poor *Rittmaister*, who is in charge of the customs officials, does not have it all his own way, for he has to divide with the officers who are off duty—and it cuts up very small.

The method of procedure is this. The purveyor of undesirable literature having arrived on the frontier, at a point some distance from the railway, approaches the *Rittmaister* and arranges matters with him. The *Rittmaister* sees him and his cart-load of books safely into the land of the Tsar and directs him to Shavli, or some other small town near the frontier. Then the *Rittmaister* raises the alarm and calls his men to horse; and they start off in pursuit of an imaginary smuggler in another direction,

firing into the air to show their zeal in the discharge of their duties.

So the books of the traveller are distributed through Russia, and find their way even to the Winter Palace of the Tsar in St. Petersburg and to the Kremlin in Moscow, and to the Palaces of the Holy Metropolitans, and to M. Pobyedonostseff, the Procurator. And so the light of civilisation is distributed in spite of the extinguisher of the censor. As yet its lamps are not so numerous as those which burn before the icons; but the little flames are illuminating the minds of many in Russia, and Western ideas prevail among the educated classes.

It is a light which the Tsar with his Cossacks is unable to quench, and he knows it and trembles, because by its beams he can read the "Writing on the Wall."

The thinker in Russia laughs at the censor, and thanks God that he cannot blue-pencil his brains.

But Russia has her own literature. What shall we say of Lomonosov or Keraskov, Kostrov, Bogdanovitch, Dershaven or Alexander Pushkin?

They were men of talent, some of genius, and some of great imagination. But their genius was hampered by the exigencies of their times. They dared not write what they knew to be the truth. They mortgaged their brains for life and liberty, and who shall blame them? The Empress Catherine, Paul, and Nicholas I. were not monarchs with whom to trifle. An indiscretion on the part of an author meant indefinite incarceration within the solid walls of a fortress.

But Nicholas II. is not Nicholas I. with the best will in the world. And, therefore, there is to-day in Russia a man who writes, and who has the courage of his great-hearted convictions. That man is Leon Tolstoi. There are in Russia thousands of men of the same stamp as Leon Tolstoi, but none like him. They prefer to mark time whilst he leads the way. They keep silence whilst he cries "Forward!" They remain in hiding whilst he stands forth alone.

Another writer with the courage of his opinions is the man who is known by the name of "Maxim Gorky." He draws with brutal force life as he has found it, and it is a hideous spectacle. He is known to me personally—a man of scarcely any education and unable to use more than two hundred words of his own language. But he needed no Oxford education to enable him to put on paper, in his straightforward, savage Russian language, what his own eyes had seen and his heart had suffered. Much of his work has found its way into the censor's oven, unpublished and unpraised.

But "Maxim Gorky" and Leon Tolstoi are two and not one. "Maxim Gorky" is a poor tramp and a thinker, and some day he will end his democratic thoughts in Siberia.

But not so Tolstoi.

Who dares to injure a hair of his noble gray head? What *Okrusnoi Sud* of Holy Russia can judge him? He is far above the courts, and fears neither them nor the Synod. He has openly defied the Metropolitans. He has even written a letter to

the "God on Earth" Himself, exhorting Him to lift Himself above His Holy Fathers. And the Tsar's answer was the Peace Congress at the Hague.

Then, why do not the Metropolitans proceed to further extremities than excommunication against Leon Tolstoi? Why not banish him to Siberia? Thousands have journeyed thither in chains for less than he has done.

But the Tsar knows well, and the Metropolitans know well, that should they lay a hand upon Leon Tolstoi or injure a hair of his head, then the thousands who are marking time in Russia would advance. They can read it by the light that has been smuggled into Russia.

And Nicholas I. turns in his sarcophagus and mutters, "*Jalka! Jalka! chto Nicholi speat!*" (What a pity that Nicholas sleeps!).

I was once present in court when a young man was brought before the judge for something that he had done which did not please the authorities. The case was going against him, and it was evident that he would be convicted. At this juncture Tolstoi, dressed in the red *rubaschka* and long boots of a peasant, walked into the court-house and stood before the judge.

"Sir," he said, "you must release this man. In committing the offence with which he is charged he was acting on my instructions. I am here to take the responsibility. You can sentence me, but no other shall pay the penalty for my deeds."

The judge looked coldly at the dignified old man, with his long gray beard.

"I hear what your Excellency says," he answered. "The case against the prisoner is dismissed. I shall refer the matter to my superior in St. Petersburg."

"If I am wanted," said Tolstoi, placing his *shljapa* on his head, "you know where I am to be found."

And he turned and walked out of the court-house.

The Procurator, M. Pobyedonostseff, the first adviser to the Tsar, at whose instigation hapless Jews have been done to death and Poles and Finns persecuted and destroyed, has on several occasions written letters of reprimand to Tolstoi; but he has never dared to go beyond reprimand. On the other hand, Tolstoi has frequently written to ministers in St. Petersburg taunting them with the egregious barbarity of the administration of justice.

On one occasion he demanded to know why a certain lady who had circulated works of his own was kept in prison and tortured to the verge of madness, whilst he, the author of the prohibited books, was allowed to go free. But the challenge was not accepted, and Tolstoi remains at liberty.

PART II

THE JEW IN RUSSIA

CHAPTER I

THE RABBI

I DEVOTED a great deal of time whilst I was in Russia to the study of the Jews, and the problems which surround their existence as subjects of the Tsar. And that I might thoroughly acquaint myself with their nature, habits, and modes of thought, I lived among them and with them for a considerable period.

Every grade and every class came under my notice, from the richest to the poorest; from the Rabbi to the renegade. Their language, the Yiddish, I acquired whilst living amongst them. Their religion and laws I already knew when I went to them, having studied the Talmud for three years in Jerusalem, though I am not myself a Jew.

The Russian Jew of the present day is a survival of the bygone times of the Sanhedrin, or of the days of Philo, the Jew philosopher of Grecian fame. Their religion, laws, and customs are unchanged to this day. The Sanhedrin was dissolved when the

Temple at Jerusalem was destroyed. But the law is still administered by the Rabbinates in the various towns throughout the length and breadth of Russia where the Jews are to be found.

Among the Rabbis of Russia there have been, and are to this day, many men of great wisdom and learning, whose fame has reached to every country of the earth. In the city of Kovno there was a great Rabbi, Isaac Elchonon, whose name is known and reverenced throughout all Jewry. He wrote many books on the law and philosophy; and it was for him that Alexander II. sent on several occasions, when he wanted information about the Jews. Rabbi Elchonon was always the first to raise his voice against the persecution of the Jews, without fear of the Tsar. So zealous was he in the defence of his people that he undermined his health and died working in their cause.

Rabbi Elchonon left several sons, great in learning; but none of them have attained to the lustre and prominence of their father. One became Rabbi in Mitau, and is now chief Rabbi in Kovno, in his father's place. Another great Rabbi, whom I knew, was Ellinka Leeder. He was Rabbi in Sagory, and his fame was great even amongst the Lithuanians, Letts, and Poles. Unlike Rabbi Elchonon of Kovno, he never cared to travel or to leave his place. His devotion to his people was infinite, and places him, in that respect, on a line with Moses. He was always to be found either in the synagogue or in his own house; and he would accept honours from no one. In the streets of the town one day a

Lithuanian fell on his knees and began to worship Rabbi Leeder. The godly man was horrified; and from that day he seldom left his house except to go to the synagogue.

I called on him once at his house in Sagory, and was admitted without ceremony. I found him in a large room, simply furnished with a sofa and a few chairs, and a large table covered with a green cloth; and there were books everywhere. He spoke to me kindly, and asked from what country I had come. I told him that I had lately arrived in Russia from America.

"And how do they treat the Jews in America?" he asked. I noticed that there were tears in his eyes and that he seemed much affected when he spoke of his own people.

I replied that Christian or Jew made no difference to a man's treatment in America; and that the highest offices were open to both alike.

When I had finished speaking, perhaps with a little pride, of the free institutions of the Anglo-Saxon races, he went to the table and handed me a newspaper in Hebrew.

"Alas! that I should live to see this day," he cried pointing to a paragraph in the paper. "Our children are taken from their mothers, and the babes from their mother's breasts, and dashed to pieces before their eyes. Our sisters are polluted, and our homes are consumed with fire."

I looked at the newspaper. It contained an account of the massacre of the Jews in Kiev a few days before, when hundreds had been ruthlessly

slain by the Christian population, who spared neither women nor children; whilst the police looked on at the scene of carnage unmoved.

Then Rabbi Leeder raised his voice to heaven, and implored Almighty God to let him die and see no more the affliction of his people. I stood by with bowed head and shame in my heart—for was not I a Christian? And this thing had been done in the sacred name of Christ and of the mother of Christ.

I left his house dazed and ashamed. In the face of the atrocious outrage which had been perpetrated on his people, I could find no defence to offer to Rabbi Leeder for the Church of Christ. I could only meditate on the infinite disparity between the teaching of Christ and the dogmas of the Church which calls itself His. It was no consolation to remember that for the last nineteen hundred years more than half the wars and massacres and murders that have been waged and committed were waged and committed in His Name.

Rabbi Leeder was a second Jeremiah, day and night his eyes were wet with tears for the persecution of the Jews in Russia. His lamentations were unceasing and absolutely honest. He was offered a very large salary to go to Odessa as Rabbi; and a certain synagogue in New York made him a still more advantageous offer; but he would never leave his poor congregation in Sagory, from whom he received not a *kopek* of money, his salary consisting of rations of bread and meat and a humble house to live in. If he received any money as a present he

would have it sent at once for the relief of his persecuted brethren in Russia or Roumania; but he never handled money himself.

He died whilst I was still in Russia, and the mourning for him there was indescribable. *Hespaidim made* (bewailing prayers) were said for him in all the large cities of the world.

No Jew will live even in the smallest towns in Russia unless there is a Rabbi there. There is a village called Pockroi, with a population of only some two hundred families, mostly Jews, and even this small community has its Rabbi. In the event of the Rabbi dying, or leaving the town, the Elders immediately communicate with the chief Rabbi in their *Gubernii*, who sends them a Rabbi on approval, and changes him until the Elders intimate that they have elected a Rabbi.

The members of the synagogue vote for their Rabbi in the synagogue. Should there be more than one synagogue, the votes of all the synagogues are counted together, and submitted to the president and vice-president of the synagogue, who declare finally the name of the elected Rabbi. His salary is fixed by the votes of the congregation before the election takes place. The president and vice-president and the treasurer of the synagogue are elected annually. As soon as the Rabbi has been elected, the Elders call upon him and acquaint him with the fact. If he is not resident in the town, a letter is drafted in the Holy Script and sent to him. When the new Rabbi enters the town the Elders go out to meet him, greet him with rejoicings, and conduct

him to his house. In the evening all the members of the congregation call and congratulate him, and he gives them his blessing.

Then the women of the congregation call upon the wife of the Rabbi. The ladies are great gossips, and the Rabbi's wife is at once posted in all the tittle-tattle of the community. More especially is she told of any short-comings on the part of the married ladies with regard to the "shaitel." Now the "shaitel" is a wig, and when a Jewess is married she is required to cut off her hair and wear a "shaitel." It may be made from her own hair if she likes, but she must wear a "shaitel" of some sort. "There's the rub"; for the girl with beautiful, glossy, black hair has a strong objection to cutting it off—and no wonder! So she does not. Her sisters, who were only too thankful to shear off their meagre wisps of dusky filaments and don a full-bloomed wig when they were married, look askance at her, and tell the Rabbi's wife.

But more serious than the "shaitel" is the gossip of the "mikva," for that may affect the legitimacy of their children. The "mikva" is a certain bath which all girls must enter on marriage, and even after marriage at stated periods, according to the law of Moses, which is to this day scrupulously observed by the devout and faithful all over the world.

The wife of the Rabbi is a tactful little lady. She listens to the gossip with a charitable ear, and straightens out the difficulties and misunderstandings with a smooth hand.

It is the duty of the Rabbi to see that his people observe the law according to Poskim, which is a decision above the Talmud, and all the lesser ceremonies of the common law. He must affix his seal to all meat to be sold to the Jews by Christian butchers. All disputes, whether between husband and wife, or master and servant, or merchant and merchant, are brought to the Rabbi for decision, and he judges according to the law of Moses, from which there is no appeal; and all abide by his decision.

It is for the Rabbi to decide whether meat that has been accidentally sprinkled with any milky substance may be eaten by the household; or, if a knife that is used for butter should, inadvertently, be also used for meat, whether the meat may be eaten; and many other "jots and tittles" of the law.

He lectures in the synagogue to his congregation at stated intervals. At marriages he is present, and gives his blessing and a lecture to the contracting parties. He zealously upholds the fourth Commandment, and reasons sternly with the Sabbath-breakers. He attends at the bedside of the sick and dying and offers consolation; nor does he exact fees for his services as the popes of the Holy Church of Russia do on such occasions, but he would rather rebuke the offerer of money. When he attends a funeral it is a mark of special respect to the deceased. In fact, from circumcision to to the grave the Rabbi is the Law and the Prophets to his congregation.

I used to know a Rabbi in Minsk who was called "the Shirtless Rabbi." He earned the nickname

from the fact that he was unable to keep a shirt on his back. The truth of the matter is that this particular shirtless Rabbi never had any money—I don't think he had ever seen a rouble in his life; but he was of a very charitable disposition. When a beggar approached him in the street and asked alms, the Rabbi would say: "My brother, I have no money; but come with me." The beggar would follow him to a side street, and there the Rabbi would divest himself of his shirt and give it to the beggar, saying, "Take this, brother, you will be able to get something for it."

Then he would put on his coat again and turn up the collar and return quietly to his house, endeavouring if possible to escape the observation of his wife. In an hour he had forgotten all about his shirt, and was quite prepared to give away another, if he had it. It was his wife who used to remind him of his missing shirts. She strongly disapproved of this form of charity; but it was useless for her to expostulate, the shirts continued to disappear in spite of her protests.

When I had been in Minsk about a fortnight, I heard the story of "the Shirtless Rabbi"; and there was another story about him going the rounds at the time. It was to the effect that he had officiated at the marriage of a rich couple; and that the bridegroom, knowing that the Rabbi would not accept money for his services, had slipped an envelope containing a note for fifty roubles into the Rabbi's coat pocket. The Rabbi had gone home in ignorance of his good fortune; but his wife had quickly discovered

it, and took possession of the bank-note, knowing full well that her husband was not to be trusted with it. The next day she went into the town and purchased a new shirt for the Rabbi at a cost of two and a half roubles, which he still wore.

Now the story of "the Shirtless Rabbi" amused me immensely. "To give the shirt off one's back" has become a common metaphorical phrase in our own country, but I could not believe that it was a form of benevolence that was actually practised. I determined, however, to test the accuracy of the phrase for myself, and, if possible, to become the possessor of that two and a half rouble shirt. I disguised myself as a beggar, with the help of an old suit of clothes, and a "*hittelle*" on my head, and for five nights I waited outside the house of "the Shirtless Rabbi."

On the sixth night the Rabbi emerged from his house in company with another man. The presence of the stranger frustrated my plans, for it was not likely that the Rabbi would part with his shirt in the presence of a third party. So I waited patiently, hoping that he would return alone.

Whilst I was walking up and down a *gorodovoy* came up to me.

"You dog's son and pickpocket move on!" he commanded.

I moved; but I swore vengeance on that *gorodovoy*. May no one be a pickpocket but the police?

Presently I saw the Rabbi returning alone. But his coat-collar was turned up, and I feared that some other scoundrel had been before me, and secured that

expensive shirt. However, I followed him, and poured into his ear a tale of starvation and woe. A moment later I regretted it. For the good Rabbi turned upon me a look of genuine compassion and sadness. I could see in his eyes the weary expression of pain of one who suffers with his fellows, and is therefore always suffering; and I felt ashamed of myself.

"Oï, oï!" he said gently, "follow me, brother."

There was nothing to be done but follow him, though my conscience accused me of cowardice.

He stopped suddenly at a dark corner of the street, and, throwing off his coat, divested himself of his shirt, and, rolling it into a bundle, came towards me with his face wreathed in smiles. He thrust it into my hands saying, "May God bless you—but that is all I have."

Then he looked at me narrowly, and I suppose the contrition that I felt was apparent in my face, for he went on: "I like thy face, my son, come and see me to-morrow."

He left me, and for some minutes I stood still with the shirt in my hands, and a voice in my ears crying, "Shame! Shame!"

Then a violent desire seized me to go in search of the *gorodovoy* who had called me a dog's son and a pickpocket, and to wring his neck. I believe at that moment I was capable of any crime, and it is as well that I failed to come across him again.

I went back to my hotel, and to bed; but I could not sleep. The compassionate eyes of "the Shirtless

Rabbi" haunted me, and the voices in my ears still cried, "Shame! Shame!"

The next morning, before ten o'clock, I had already bought half a dozen embroidered flannel shirts of the best make in the town, and was on my way to the Rabbi's house.

The Rabbi's wife admitted me — she was a shrewish little woman—and after she had shown me into the library, I could hear her calling to husband impatiently, "Nu! Nu! Why don't you come? The Orel (uncircumcised) is waiting for you."

And then the old Rabbi came in bowing to me; and his wife stood outside the open door, rubbing her nose in her apron, and looking suspiciously at me as though she feared to leave me alone with her husband.

I asked her whether she would not come in and sit down and hear what I had come to say. She muttered something about being busy brewing mead for the Passover; but curiosity got the better of her sense of duty, and she left the hops and honey to listen to my story.

I confessed all to the Rabbi, and substantiated my story by the production of the shirt, which I begged permission to keep. Then I handed to his wife the parcel containing the six new shirts and a fifty rouble note as a fine for my offence.

The old Rabbi was very unwilling to receive the money; but I would not take it back; and finally his wife took possession of it. As I left the house I heard her say to her husband:

"What a piece of luck, Mendel! You will be able to give away your shirt six times now."

The old Rabbi forgave me frankly for the trick I had played on him. I made several calls upon them during my stay in Minsk, and became quite a favourite with the old lady. In fact, I was invited to their house for the feast of the Passover, and was thus enabled to find out many things that I did not know before.

The shirt of "the Shirtless Rabbi" I retain to this day. It is amongst the most treasured relics of my travels.

CHAPTER II

EDUCATION OF THE JEWS

In a former chapter on education in Russia I pointed out the disabilities under which the Jews are placed with regard to the national educational establishments of the country, and I mentioned that, in spite of the stringent regulations in force to keep them in ignorance, the Jews receive a sound education in their own communities, which raises them above the level of their Russian neighbours in this respect.

I propose here to deal briefly with the system of education in use among the Jews in Russia, and to endeavour to show the dangers to which Russia is exposing herself by the suppression of education among the Jews and other nationalities who are unwilling subjects of her rule.

Education among the Jews in Russia is not compulsory and it is not free. Nevertheless, nearly every Jewish child in Russia is sent to the "Chedar" to be instructed. If the parents are too poor to be able to pay the fees for their children, some one will always be found to meet the expense, for education is regarded as an absolute essential among the Jews; besides, there is Talmud-torah (free school).

A boy is sent to the "Chedar" when he is between five and six years old. His father will cover him up

in a "talith" (a striped shawl with fringes), enveloping him completely in its folds, and carry him to the "Chedar," where he is to be taught.

The Rebbe (the teacher) of the "Chedar" comes forward to receive his new pupil, and makes him sit down at a table amongst the other children. A black-board is placed before the future Philo covered with the letters of the alphabet in large print, and the Rebbe begins his instruction. He points out each letter to the child, and tells him the name of it. "This is called Aleph (א), and this Beth (ב), and this Gimmel (ג)," he explains.

Then, when he has told him the first four or five letters, he asks the child to repeat them to him. The proud father stands, unobserved, behind his child, and, if he repeats the letters correctly, he lets fall upon the table in front of him a few almonds and raisins; and the child is told that, because he has answered rightly, the Angel Gabriel has made raisins drop from heaven for him to eat.

But the poor youngster comes to grief soon enough when the Rebbe takes him further in the mystic letters, and the raisins cease to fall from heaven. In a few days time the Angel Gabriel becomes more stingy; and sometimes the child will make no mistakes, and yet no raisins fall from heaven. By the end of a week he has ceased to place any confidence in the rewards of the Angel Gabriel.

The boy will remain at the "Chedar" until he is of age; the Jew comes of age at thirteen. But in the case of very poor families the boys will be taken from the "Chedar" before they come of age, so that

they may be apprenticed to some trade. When this is done, the responsibilities of the parent with regard to their sons are ended. Among the richer people, the boys are taken away from the "Chedar" when they come of age, and are sent to a more advanced school of learning.

In some of the "Chedars" the Rebbe used to employ a student from the Real Schools to instruct the children in Russian reading and writing, history—such as it is in Russia—and elementary mathematics. For that class an extra fee was charged to the parents. In other "Chedars" teachers were employed from the Gymnasiums for instruction in foreign languages and more advanced subjects. But of late all such teachers and professors for "Chedars" have been forbidden by the Tsar. The Jews, therefore, who are possessed of the means to do so, send their children to Germany, France, or England after they leave the "Chedars" to complete their education. Any child who has passed through the "Chedars" knows the Mishna, and a good many of them are Talmudical students.

To whatever part of the Empire I travelled, from Archangel to Astrakhan, from Bessarabia to Grodno, from Kharkoff to Vilna, I always found that the most intelligent and apt students were the Jews, and next to the Jews the Poles. Yet these are the very people for whom the Tsar, in his wisdom, prescribes "No education!"

But in the universities of Germany, France, Switzerland, Italy, England, and even of America, you will find Poles and Russian Jews. These

students, though they are in foreign seats of learning, are the most bitter enemies to Russia. And if Russia has any cause for fear, or if the Holy Tsar and the Procurator and the Synod have reason for uneasiness of mind, it is on account of these young men at the foreign universities, whom they have driven out of Russia in search of education and enlightenment. Among them are no waverers; they speak but little, yet their jaws are set; and they have only one purpose before them in the world.

Here is a story from the Talmud *Psochim*, which the Tsar and the Metropolitans would do well to "read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest," even though it comes from the book of the heretic.

When the children of Israel were established in their strength, and in the fear of the Lord their God, they worshipped Him in the Temple at Jerusalem, where He dwelt, within the Holy of Holies. And every year the people gathered themselves together at the Holy City, Jerusalem, to partake of the Feast of the Korban-Pessach. Now a certain man who was an *Orel* ("uncircumcised") went every year to Jerusalem and partook of the Feast of the Korban-Pessach, which it is not lawful for the uncircumcised to eat. Now there lived many miles from Jerusalem a great Rabbi, by the name of Juda ben Thara, well stricken in years and infirm. And the *Orel* came unto him and said: "Behold, I who am uncircumcised go every year to the Feast of Korban-Pessach at Jerusalem, and eat of the meat of the Feast which ye say it is not lawful for the uncircumcised to eat, and I go my way and no man knoweth

thereof." And Rabbi Juda ben Thara answered, and said unto him: "What portion of the meat give they unto thee?" And he said: "The lean portion." Then said the Rabbi unto him: "Surely they deal unjustly with thee, seeing that they give thee not of the fat of the meat. When thou goest again to Jerusalem to the Feast of Korban-Pessach, say unto the priest: 'Give me to eat of the fat of the meat.' And if he will not give it to thee, then shalt thou say that I, Juda ben Thara, told thee to ask it, and thou wilt receive thy due." And when the Feast of the Korban-Pessach drew nigh, the same man went up to Jerusalem to the Feast. And he went into the Temple, and said unto the priest: "Give me to eat of the fat of the meat." Now it is not lawful for the people to eat of the fat of the meat, which is a sacrifice unto God. And the priest said unto him: "Why dost thou ask for that which is not lawful?" And the man answered: "Rabbi Juda ben Thara told me that I should ask it." Then knew they that he was not of the Children of Israel. And they brought him before the High Priest, and dealt with him according to the law. Then the "Sanhedrin" sent word unto the Rabbi, saying: "Though thou livest far from the Holy City, in Nitchvin Armenia, yet is thy net spread unto Jerusalem."

The Tsar would do well to remember that, whilst he is defiling the homes of the Jews in Russia, the net of the students whom he has driven to foreign universities is being spread, and one day it may reach even to the Tsarskoi Selo.

But let History record her own pages.

CHAPTER III

THE JEWISH MERCHANT

ALL over the world, in whatever country you meet him, the Jew has one marked characteristic : he will never perform manual labour unless he is absolutely obliged to do so. His genius is for becoming rich on the labour of others. It is this trait in his nature that has made him unpopular with the rest of the world. The Christian fanatic shades his head and points to Calvary, and talks of the wrath of God and vengeance. But the truth is simple. The Jew has an aptitude for making money. Money is the god of the civilised world. The civilised world objects to any one making a corner in gods. The Jew makes a corner in civilised gods. And, therefore, the world hates the Jew.

But the genius of the Jew is not confined to becoming rich by using his brains whilst others use their hands. If the world hates the Jew for his money, she should not forget her debt to him for the priceless treasures which he has conferred upon her in literature, science, music, and art. Does the world owe Israel nothing for such men as Philo, Aaron ben Asher, Solomon Gabirol, Halevy, Mendelssohn, Heine, Meyerbeer, Rubinstein, Joachim, and many others ?

And if the sordid conglomeration of humanity that calls itself the civilised world can see no merit in such names as these, then I base my appeal to her Christian charity on arguments more suited to her understanding. And I ask, what better stewards can you find for the wealth of nations, aye for their honour too, than the Jews? Does Britain owe nothing to Lord Beaconsfield, Montefiore, or the Rothschilds? Can France repudiate her debt to Fould, Gaudahaux, Oppert; or Germany to Fürst, Steinschneider, Herxheimer, Lasker, Auerbach, Traube, and Lazarus and Benfey!

But it is not with the Jews in the civilised world that we are concerned at present. They can be trusted to look after themselves, whilst we go back to the Jew in Russia.

There, as in every other country, he is principally engaged in commerce. The finest wholesale and retail establishments in Russia are conducted by Jews, in spite of the law that no Jew is allowed to trade in any town, unless he was born there. This rule is very strictly adhered to in large cities such as St. Petersburg, Moscow, Odessa, &c.

There are Jews who nominally become Christians—that is to say, members of the Russian Church—in order to enjoy greater facilities for trading. This is one class of Jew which brings discredit on the whole race, and is utterly despised by the Jewish community. Oppression and persecution and death are bravely born and faced by the Jews in Russia every day; it is easy, therefore, to understand how bitterly they resent the

apostasy of any member of their community for the sake of gain.

In certain businesses in Russia the Jew has a monopoly. For instance, in Lodz, the great cloth manufacturing town, nearly all the inhabitants, including the mill-owners, are Jews. Some of them are very rich. Their woollen stuffs are used extensively throughout Russia, and I believe they have an export trade as well. Hundreds of hands are employed at these works, engineers, dyers, pattern-makers, &c. No business is conducted on Saturdays—the Jewish Sabbath—and the mills are closed. They have their own hospitals and almshouses for the poor, supported entirely by the Jewish community.

In other directions the Jew is equally enterprising—in Russian leather, sail-cloths, cotton and linen stuffs, plate glass and crystal, iron, copper, and porcelain. In fact, he deals in everything under the sun.

He may not eat the flesh of the pig, but he does a large business in their bristles. There is a saying amongst them: "The *chazer is traif*; but his hair is kosher"—the swine is unclean, but his hair is clean.

There is no more charitable person than the Jewish merchant. When he gives, he does it quietly. There is no loud report, as of a tray of crockery thrown from the housetop, such as heralds the beneficence of so many people whom we know. The Rabbi knows it possibly, for he is made the medium of the transaction; but no one else.

But all the Jewish traders in Russia are not

merchant princes. In the smaller towns the wife attends to the business of the shop, whilst her husband is in *Beth Hamedrosh* learning the Talmud. She is proud to conduct his purely mundane affairs for him, so that he may become a scholar, and she takes credit to herself for half of his learning. The study of the Talmud in *Beth Hamedrosh* (the outer courts of the synagogue) is looked upon as a holy occupation, and the student is regarded as a man of distinction by the community. The very poor Talmudical student is supported by his neighbours during his researches. Even the old women may be seen bringing to the *Beth Hamedrosh* food for the students within.

Then there is the Jew in Russia who has no shop and no visible occupation, neither does he study the Talmud in *Beth Hamedrosh*. But he is always to be found where the feast is prepared. At a wedding, he is first at the table to eat; at a "Brith Millah," (circumcision) he is the first to arrive and the last to leave the table. At the election of a Rabbi, or of the officers of the synagogue, his voice is heard above all others; and he lays down the law on the question of the Rabbi's salary. In the *traktir* (restaurant) it is always the other fellow who pays for the chicken and schnapps; and even in the bath he calls to his neighbour to throw the water on the heated stone, that he may enjoy more warmth from the steam without trouble to himself.

What is his business? He is the philanthropist who is ready to assist his needy neighbours in their financial difficulties, "on note of hand simply," and

on terms as advantageous to himself as he is able to exact. He is more prompt and not more grasping than his London prototype, and just as merciful. The rate of interest that he charges is not so high, for the simple reason that he cannot get it; and he has to be satisfied with a good deal less than 150 per cent.

But he draws the line as to whom he will lend his money. The Russian aristocracy are not on his books, though they should offer 500 per cent. And the reason is not far to seek. For Nicholas II. is liberal with his ukases; and it is always on the cards that he may order the members of the aristocracy to repudiate all debts to Jews that bear interest at a higher rate than $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. Such a ukase breaks the heart of the Russian aristocrat, who, of course, is anxious to pay his money back to the poor Jew. But in the face of the ukase of the Tsar, what can he do?

So the Jew leaves the aristocracy alone, though they seek him night and day for pecuniary assistance. It is only when they offer some valuables to deposit as security that he will listen to them. On gold and silver plate, jewellery or valuable furs, he will advance them money; but even then he demands a document, signed before two witnesses and sworn before a Notary Public, to certify that the valuables are their own property.

But there was a worse pest than the usurer among the Russian Jews, and that was the "Isborstchik."

He began his career under the *Douma*, before the

days of the *Voinskaia Pavinost*, when his principal duties were those of the press-gang. He was required to produce Jewish soldiers for the service of the Tsar, and he stuck at nothing to obtain recruits. His other duties were connected with the passport system. His business was to go from house to house once or twice a year and levy taxes on the passports of all who lived in his *syezd* (county). He was a blood-sucker of the worst description. When he entered a house his eyes would travel rapidly round the room, as though he were appraising the value of the furniture. Then he looked to the condition of the owner and his family, whether they appeared prosperous and well clothed. And when he had finished his inspection, he would sit down uninvited and begin to talk.

"You see, Mr. Mosche, your passport has only a few weeks to run; and this year I find that your home is of richer aspect then it used to be. Your wife has a new dress, and it is not *jountev* (holiday) yet. Last year, you may remember, you paid for your passport only eighteen roubles. But this year you will have to pay thirty roubles; you know I am very reasonable in taxing you to that amount—eh? It is not as though I received all the money myself."

And the poor devil was obliged to pay thirty roubles or quit the place where he made his living.

The *Isborstchik* lost his official rank and position many years ago; nevertheless, he still finds employment in a nefarious trade. He is now the middleman in the illicit passport trade, and is employed both by the *Meschanskaia Uprava* and by the

Starostà to obtain money from people who are in need of passports to which they are not legally entitled.

But it is not for me to abuse the *Isborstchik;* the poor fellow only pockets a small portion of the money he receives from his customers, the greater part going into the pockets of the *Meschanskaia Uprava*, and there was once an occasion when I had reason to be thankful for his services.

CHAPTER IV

THE RUSSIAN JEWESS

THE daughters of the Jews in Russia are brought up to work, and the idle girl is almost unknown. If the parents can afford it she is educated at home; but in the case of the very poor the girls are sent to the "Chedar" to be educated. At the age of nine or ten years she is able to read and write Hebrew and Russian. She is then taught housekeeping and cooking; and the care of the younger members of the family devolves upon her.

At fifteen years of age she is already a little housekeeper, and is also earning a trifle for herself by sewing, or making gloves for some shop in the town at so much a dozen pairs. Others live by dressmaking or carpet-weaving. In various callings they find occupation until the day comes for them to be married.

That important day arrives for nearly all of them. I do not think that I met ten old maids among the Jewesses in Russia. The majority of the girls are married between the ages of nineteen and twenty-one. And it is a sore grief to the mother who has an unmarried daughter on her hands over the age of three-and-twenty.

A singular feature in Jewish marriages, more

especially in Russia, is the employment of the "Shatchen." He is to be found in every town in Russia, and his business is to bring together suitable couples for matrimonial purposes. The introduction generally takes place in the house of the girl's parents, whither the "Shatchen" has brought the young man on approval. For the first visit he is their guest, and nothing more. But when he leaves the house the "Shatchen" remains behind and confers with the parents, and if everything is satisfactory the engagement is made between them, without reference to the inclinations of the prospective bride, unless, indeed, she happens to be a young lady of decided views.

For years the parents have been saving up money against this day. For in accordance with the "nadan," with which they are enabled to endow their daughter, will the status and wealth of her husband be. If she is to marry a tailor or bootmaker, she must be endowed with about 200 roubles. If a clerk in a shop, 400 roubles. A goldsmith or watchmaker will expect his bride to come to him with 600 roubles. Whilst a well-favoured young man, with a knowledge of the Mishna and Talmud, and a good pedigree, will stipulate for 2000 roubles, And so on up the social and financial scale to tens and hundreds of thousands of roubles.

Reb Yankel, the prosperous young leather merchant, goes to the "Shatchen" and places himself matrimonially in his hands. He tells him that his shop and stock are worth 20,000 roubles, and that he expects his wife to bring him that amount.

The "Shatchen" makes a note of it, and verifies Reb Yankel's statement. It is a good commission, and he is prepared to travel a thousand miles in search of a rich bride for him.

It is obvious that the "Shatchen" must be a man of great tact and business capacity. As a rule, he is a man of fifty or more, with a long, patriarchal beard and corkscrew "paies" curled over his ears. He wears a long double-breasted coat and a "kapeluch" on his head. He is a man of learning, with a fund of small talk and good stories. He is soft of speech, and when he is talking his hands join in the conversation, gesticulating wildly in unison with his words. He has always an eye to business, and knows the names and probable "nadan" of every girl in the town. And in his pocket-book is noted down the names of the marriageable young men, with their prices in secret figures against them.

He keeps up a general correspondence with the "Shatchens" in neighbouring towns, with a view to mutual accommodation. "I have a young man of the value of 50,000 roubles," he writes to his *confrère*, "but I will take 40,000 in cash or 20,000 on engagement, 10,000 on the day of the wedding, and two 'vekcels' (promissory notes) of 10,000 each payable in two years."

If matches are made in heaven, it follows that the "Shatchen," among the Jews in Russia, is the direct representative of heaven, and a very important personage in the community. His lot is, as a rule, a happy one; but he sometimes has his troubles, poor man.

I was once a witness to a lamentable miscarriage of his arrangements. It was in the town of Chernigov. I had been invited to a Jewish wedding which was to take place in the courtyard of the bride's house, and I went. The guests were all assembled and the Rabbi and his assistants were ready to proceed with the ceremony according to the rites of Israel. The canopy, with its four decorated posts, supported by members of the family, was in the middle of the courtyard. And beneath the canopy the bridegroom stood, waiting for his bride to make the seven circuits of the canopy before she joined him beneath it.

I was standing close to the bridegroom, when the bride, leaning on the arm of her bridesmaid, began to walk round the canopy. She had completed the seven solemn circles, and was about to enter, when the bridegroom suddenly came from under the canopy and demanded to see the bride's father. The old man, with anxious looks, hurried up to him, and I could overhear a hasty conversation about 200 roubles.

It seems that the bridegroom had received 800 roubles three days before the wedding, and the girl's father had promised to pay the balance of 200 roubles on the wedding-day. Through some unforeseen circumstances he had been unable to obtain the ready money by the appointed day, and he now offered the bridegroom a note of hand for the amount. But the bridegroom was firm as a rock, and refused to allow the ceremony to proceed until he had been paid those 200 roubles in cash.

Among the assembled guests there was some confusion and an undercurrent of whispered questions. What did it mean? Why was the ceremony interrupted? The bride herself stood still before the canopy leaning on her bridesmaid's arm. Her head was bowed, and through the veil which she wore I could see her cheeks burning with shame and indignation. It was evident that she guessed at the cause of the interruption of the ceremony.

At last the Rabbi walked beneath the canopy and addressed the recalcitrant bridegroom in clear words that all could hear: "My son, you have received 800 roubles from the father of the bride, and you were promised 200 roubles more to-day. I understand that ready money is not available to-day; but the bride's father is willing to give you a vekcel for the amount."

He paused; but the bridegroom made no sign.

"And even if a vekcel should not be forthcoming," he continued in suave tones, "let it be worth 200 roubles to you that your bride has walked around this canopy seven times."

"That is nothing to me," said the bridegroom sulkily.

He had hardly uttered the words, when the bride tore the veil from her head and confronted the assembled guests with flashing eyes.

"Never!" she cried, "never would I marry that man. No, not for a 1,000,000 roubles!"

And she turned and walked straight into the house.

A murmur of approval ran through the assembly.

For myself, I confess, my fingers were itching to give the bridegroom a sound thrashing. The outcome of it all was, that the bridegroom had to return the 800 roubles which he had received to the bride's father. The only loser by the transaction was the unfortunate "Shatchen," who experienced to the full the truth of the proverb: "There is many a slip 'twixt cup and the lip."

Like any other professional men, there are "Shatchens" and "Shatchens." Some will not touch a match under 5000 roubles; whilst others are dependent for their business on 50 and 100 rouble couples. It is a remarkable fact that the marriages arranged by the "Shatchens," among the Jews in Russia, are almost invariably successful. Divorces are extremely rare, and marriage scandals of all kinds are seldom heard of. If any trouble arises between husband and wife it is generally referred to the Rabbi, who, with a great deal of tact and forbearance smooths over all unpleasantnesses.

The Rabbi in Israel is indeed a marvellous person. How much simpler it would be if, in the great civilised world, where we mistrust and hate our neighbour and attribute the basest of motives to his every act, even to his acts of charity; where we fly at each other's throats armed with the talons of the law in defence of what we are pleased to call our rights, but which is, in fact, only our self-interest; where we wallow in the squalor of the divorce court and hang out our shame on the clothes-lines of public opinion—how much simpler it would be if we could have our Rabbis, learned, simple-minded,

disinterested, to whom we could bring our troubles and our wrongs, and rest assured that they would right them.

I can see the sleek-faced parson volunteering for the post with the confidence of self-righteousness and the assurance of his high calling. But no, my friend! You can never don the breeches of the Rabbi. You have studied your Bible and you have dabbled in Hebrew, but you know nothing of the Law—the true Law. In this particular the Rabbi of Israel is as well grounded as the Lord Chief Justice of England, and a great deal better than the Supreme Court judges of the United States.

I once knew a Jew in Vilna who went into partnership with a Christian Pole in the "old clo'" line. After a time the Pole took it into his head that his Hebrew partner was not acting squarely by him. There was some trouble over a consignment of second-hand clothes and the market quotation for rags. Words ensued, but neither would give way. Suddenly a happy thought struck the Pole. *Pudjim do Rabbinovo!* he shouted ("Come to the Rabbi!").

CHAPTER V

FAMILY LIFE OF THE JEWS

WHEN the "Shatchen" has completed his work successfully and the young Jewess has become a married woman, there is no question in her mind as to where her duty lies. From that day forward her husband is all in all to her.

The enlightened and very young lady of the Western world will exclaim: "Oh, but that is impossible! She could not really love a man whom she had married under such conditions."

Go back to your bread and butter, little miss. I never said that she does love him. If you had been brought up with a strict sense of duty—a very strict sense of duty, as the young Jewish girl is brought up, you would understand that a husband may be all in all to his wife, and she may be all in all to her husband, without any unnecessary and evanescent sentiment. Remember, too, that when you eventually come to be married yourself you will be handed over to the highest bidder, and your mother will tell you how much you love him before you discover it yourself.

It may be that the Jewish girl has no heart, as the six-shilling novel reckons heart; it may be that she has no love for her husband, as the schoolgirl

understands love. I will grant it. I have not set out to write a treatise on the psychology of sex; but to record facts as I found them in Russia. And since I have lived for more than a year in the house of a poor Jewish bootmaker and his wife in Kazan, I can give some sort of notion of their mode of life.

Rubinski was a powerful young man, who made boots of all sizes. These were mostly long boots, such as are worn by all Russians, reaching to the knee and wrinkled above the ankle. He generally had eight or ten pairs made up, and twice a week he used to take them to the market-place to sell. He had a stand in the market, for which he paid a fee of fifteen kopeks daily, and sometimes more. On market days he would be at his stand from eight in the morning until five in the evening. His wife used to take his dinner up to him at the market at noon, and wait until he had finished, so that she could bring back the cloth and platter. Whilst she was waiting, she would look at the boots dangling from the cross-bar above the stall and count them, to see how many pairs her husband had sold. Then she would wonder what price he had received for the pairs that were gone. That is a very material question in Russian trade, where the price varies according to the astuteness of buyer and seller.

She knows that the boots cost her husband in material alone two roubles and seventy-five kopeks; then there is his labour. It takes him two days at sixteen hours a day to make a pair. She does not trouble to work out in her head how much he should receive per hour for his work; she does not even know

the meaning of the terms, "trade union" and "living wage." She only hopes that he has sold them well.

Rubinski is all smiles when he has made a good bargain. He tells her that he has made seven roubles for two days work. But he is less communicative if he has made only a rouble or so on the transaction. He has his own scale of charges for his goods. From the farmer he will ask seven roubles; from the "swell" fifteen. The asking is easy enough, what troubles the poor *sapojnik* (boot-maker) is getting what he asks.

Now Chaja, his wife, counts the boots, and notices that there are only six pairs left. Rubinski took ten pairs with him in the morning. Therefore he must have sold four pairs. He has said nothing to her about the price, and she is longing to know how much he received for his eight days work. But her husband does not tell her, and she will not ask. There is a great moral lesson even in four pairs of boots.

But Rubinski and his wife have secured me as a lodger, so they have no anxiety for the rent of their house. They have four rooms, and I have taken two of them, and for them and attendance I pay the whole rent of the house. It is an arrangement which contents both parties. I am learning the Yiddish jargon from Rubinski, and in the evenings, when he comes home, he sits and works at his boots, Chaja sits near him knitting stockings and socks, whilst I, with my pipe in my mouth, ask questions of them both.

From watching Rubinski I learn a thing or two

about boot-making, and notice that he puts a good deal of wood under the soles. When his mouth is not full of little nails he talks to me, and answers my many questions, without ceasing his boot-making. Sometimes I volunteer to act as his apprentice. I take the sole leather from the water where it has been soaking; I bind up the wrinkles in the leg of the boot over a wooden block; I rub the sole with sand-paper. Chaja looks on and laughs at me learning the trade. But in spite of her mockery, a day arrives when I put a new pair of soles on my boots. This was a triumph which I have never endeavoured to repeat. I found that it took almost as much leather off my hands as I put on to the soles of the boots. I send my boots to the cobbler now for repairs.

When Rubinski came back from the market I would ask him:

"Have you had a good day?"

No; the market was flat. No gentry were there; only a few farmers with their milk-carts, and some *strugovtchiks* from the Volga. But, God be praised! I made nine roubles on the seven pairs of boots I sold last market-day."

Nine roubles for fourteen days work of sixteen hours a day seems pitiable enough; but Rubinski is quite happy, and he is saving up a little money.

Chaja bakes the bread, and cooks the meals, and does all the housework; but she manages to find time to call on her neighbours and the Rabbi's wife now and then and indulge in a little gossip. Sometimes I overhear her telling her neighbours what

a useful person her lodger is—how he splits the logs for the fire and puts them in the sun to dry, and does various other odd jobs. Then she sinks her voice, and says what a pity it is that he is not a Jew.

But one day Chaja was not out of bed in the morning, and Rubinski came to my room, a very sad man, with tears in his eyes. He told me that Chaja was ill, and would I go and see her.

I went to her room, and when I asked her what was the matter—

"Oï," she cried, "*ouf alle goim gesogt*!" ("My pains should all the Christians have!")

I laughed aloud; and she hastened to correct herself.

"Nain! Nain! I did not mean you, nor the Christians of your country. But I wish it to all the Russian Christians."

"Well, you can go on wishing that," I said. "But you must take care of yourself."

Chaja had the influenza badly, and it was some weeks before she recovered.

Rubinski and Chaja had no children, and in this respect they differed from the majority of the married Jews in Russia, who, for the most part, have large families.

The Jewess is a very gentle and loving mother, and she lavishes upon her children all the tender affection which has perhaps found no outlet before she became a mother.

In his habits and modes of life the Russian Jew is regular and frugal. A drunken Jew is a thing practically unknown. During the whole nine years

that I was in Russia I do not think that I saw three cases of drunkenness amongst them. And yet they will drink of all kinds of wines, spirits, and beer in moderation. At the feasts and holiday celebrations the fare is liberal and the wine or spirits well supplied; but there is never any excess of eating or drinking.

The Jew is regular and punctual in his hours. He eats at the proper time and rests at the proper time. He will return from his work and go to his Beth Hamedrosh for the evening prayers, and then home to supper with the regularity of clockwork. This strict regimen keeps his brain clear and active, and endows him with physical endurance.

It is for these very qualities that he is hated and despised by the Russian aristocracy, to whom the Jew is the superior in powers of intellect, bodily strength, and deportment.

Amongst the Jews in Russia there are no tramps. The Jews take care of their own poor, and find work of some sort for the man who is down on his luck. The Russian Jews who find their way to this country and America are the young men who have fled from Russia to avoid military service. Their immigration to England does not mean that they were unable to make a living in Russia among their own people, but simply that they prefer to escape from persecution and oppression and conscription.

Here I am led into a digression from the subject of the Jew in particular to the deplorable state of uncleanliness, both bodily and locally, general throughout Russia. It was the mention of tramps

that recalled the subject to my mind, and conjured up a vision which I will describe.

A dreary road stretching away for miles and miles over a flat landscape; patches of snow are still visible here and there, in the ditches and sheltered spots; but the sun is shining fitfully through the clouds, and the promise of spring is in the air. A party of travelling popes are coming down the road with their long cloaks and brimless hats. They are making for a desolate-looking farmhouse by the road side, where they will beg their dinner and shelter for the night. They have already been for some weeks on the road, as is their custom before Easter, begging for the poor from village to village—though I should be sorry to assert that the poor receive any benefit from their mission. They are mud-stained and unkempt, and as they tramp along the dirty road they leave behind them a malodorous stench of unwashed, sweating flesh.

At the farmhouse one goes forward to the door to interview the owner and beg for food and shelter. The rest dispose themselves by the roadside in the sun, and leisurely begin to divest themselves of their garments and to search for lice in the seams and corners. They are all filthily verminous, and they have no difficulty in finding what they seek.

Presently the pope who went to the farm comes out and beckons his brothers in. They huddle on their clothes and troop into the house, where we will leave them to bow before the icon and enjoy the hospitality of the poor farmer to their hearts' content.

The plague of lice, like the plague of darkness, seems to have travelled to Russia and taken up its abode there. Ninety per cent. of the population are verminous, and they can make no secret of it; for the particular parasite from which they suffer gives them no rest.

In the baths special arrangements are made to cope with it. A long pole is suspended near the black ceiling of the bath-room, on which are hung the clothes of all the bathers, turned inside out. The heat at the top of the room is terrific, and whatever may be in those clothes is baked to cinders in an hour.

The sanitary arrangements throughout Russia are pestilential and revolting. In very few cities is there any system of drainage whatever; and even in St. Petersburg, Moscow, and Odessa the drains are very inefficient. In other towns the arrangements for the disposal of the sewage are perfectly sickening. If it were not for the six months of cold weather these insanitary conditions would provoke a plague throughout the whole country.

In addition to this, the habits of the people themselves are disgusting and indecent. But this is a subject which it is impossible to discuss. Indeed, I think it is better to let the whole unsavoury subject drop, and return once more to the Jew in Russia.

CHAPTER VI

THE JEWISH SOLDIER

THE young Jew must of course go to the *Voinskaia Povinost* like every other humble subject of the Tsar; and in the Russian Army there is no more useful soldier. His usefulness is not due to excessive martial ardour, nor to the love which he bears for Holy Russia and the Tsar; but to the simple fact that he is an educated man.

The Tsar has plenty of men to do his fighting for him, he wants no young Joshuas; but he badly needs clerks to keep the accounts, and tradesmen to make clothes and boots for the fighting line. And though he does his best to suppress the education of the Jew, he is very glad to make use of the accomplishments which he has acquired in spite of his *ukase*. O logical "God on Earth!"

Therefore you will find the Jewish soldiers employed as military clerks, and even serving as private secretaries to officers of high rank. You will find them in the topographical department making maps and drawing plans. In barracks they are employed at every kind of trade—tailoring, boot-making, carpentering, or at the smith's forge shoeing horses and welding iron.

The officers of their regiments employ them on

private jobs, quite unconnected with their duties to the State, and if they offer them any payment for their work, it takes the form of an order for a piece of pork from the cook-house, which they know the Jew will not accept.

"Here, Jew!" says an officer, "my wife wants you to make her a copper coffee-pot."

The Jew salutes and answers: "Very good, your Excellency."

He has scarcely gone to work on the coffee-pot when another officer comes up.

"You must make me a stand for a lamp of wrought iron."

"Yes, your High-born. But I have an order already from his Excellency to make a coffee-pot."

"Then you will make the lamp-stand afterwards."

That was the state of affairs in the barrack ironmonger's shop when a young officer, with whom I was acquainted, went in to give a commission to the unfortunate Jewish tradesman.

"You will come to my house and mend a *samovar*, which is leaking," he said.

The Jew saluted, and explained that he had already two orders to execute which would keep him occupied for nine days.

"You cursed Jew! Can you not work at night?" He used other endearing epithets which need not be repeated.

"Yes, your High-born, I will commence your work after nine o'clock to-night, and try to finish it before breakfast to-morrow morning."

The young officer left the shop, and I walked with him towards his mother's house, where the leaky *samovar* awaited repairs.

"Why do you talk to your men like that?" I asked.

"We have to assert our authority as officers," he answered curtly.

"If you tried it on in some countries that I know of you would find that you were making a very big mistake."

"I know what you mean," he answered callously; "but your soldiers are educated."

"No better educated than that Jew," I said.

He did not continue the discussion. Presently I persuaded him to return with me to the ironmonger's shop and tell the Jew that he need not execute his order until he had finished the work which he had on hand. But it cost me a new *samovar* to persuade him to do it.

In the regimental tailors' shop the Jew is very heavily worked. He is often kept at it night and day, and he has orders for six months ahead. He makes uniforms for the officers, and everything they wear. And his reward is to be called "a dirty diseased Jew," "A dog's son," and various other things.

The carpenter and bootmaker have also a busy time in barracks. Their services are in constant request by all officers from the *polkovnik* to the *younker*.

Then, Jews are generally employed as *dentchiks*. The *dentchik* is the officer's servant—and I cannot

imagine a more unenviable occupation. His duties are undefinable, and are only limited by the orders of his master. He cleans and scrubs the house, is in charge of the horses and carriage or sleigh, acts as nursery governess to the children, runs messages like a dog, looks after the clothes and accoutrements of his master, and does all the dirty work there is to be done.

In one respect the Jewish soldier is more fortunate than his Christian comrade in arms. He has somebody to look after him outside the barracks. It comes about in this way. The Jew will not eat the rations provided for him in barracks as it is against his religion to do so. In this respect his officers treat him kindly. They do not force him to eat. In fact, they are quite indifferent as to whether he eats or not.

But his own people have a care for him. In whatever place he is serving the Rabbi arranges with the congregation for his meals. I know of a certain rich Jew who has never less than two Jewish soldiers coming to his table three times a day. And I was told that he has done this for more than eighteen years. There are families which cannot afford to give a whole week's board to the soldier; and when this is the case the soldier is sent from house to house for his meals, so that the burden is equitably distributed throughout the community.

In a garrison town where the Jewish community was very small it once happened that about fifty Jewish soldiers were quartered. The Rabbi saw that it would be an impossibility to arrange for

the feeding of so many mouths in his small congregation, and therefore he summoned the soldiers and gave them a dispensation. They were allowed to eat the barrack fare; but the Rabbi ordered that they should throw away the first spoonful.

There are many who scoff at the strict observance by the Jews of the minutiæ of the Law, who regard the "jots and tittles" as ridiculous and trifling, and despise a religion which adheres to its old traditions and does not advance with the times.

To those people I would say—"Consider the Jews of to-day." What other nation or race in the world would have preserved its individuality and nationality in the face of the disasters which have befallen the Jews for the last nineteen hundred years? They have no country and are scattered. They are persecuted and oppressed and despised. Yet through it all they remain distinctly and unquestionably a nation.

What has held them together? What is the bond that binds the Jew in England to the Jew in Russia or America? Why have they not become absorbed into the nations of their adoption? Why are they to this day a world power? The answer to all these questions is the one word—"Religion."

Would the Christian religion, as administered by the Churches of the Protestant religion, or by the Church of Rome, have proved a strong enough bond to hold together a nation through the stress of centuries of dispersion and persecution? Lay aside prejudice, and answer truthfully, "No." And then seek for the reasons. You will find them in dissensions,

in lax discipline, in superstition, in want of learning on the part of the priests, in carelessness, in uncharitableness.

It is by unity, by the strict observance of every iota of the Law, by the erudition of the Rabbis, by attention, by charity, that the Jewish religion keeps its grasp upon the race, and has guided it through the storms of nearly two thousand years.

Then, whether we be Christians or whether we be Buddhists, we cannot afford to laugh at the religion of the Jews, or criticise the manners and forms of its administration.

It is a religion that is inculcated in every member of the community. Every child born of Jewish parents is instructed in it, however humble his parentage may be. There is no ignorance of religion among the Children of Israel.

Contrast this with the state of things in London. A British officer of my acquaintance told me the following story, and vouched for the truth of it. He was acting as recruiting officer at a certain depôt in the East End of London. One of the questions which is put to every recruit on attestation is—"What is your religion?" My friend assured me that he frequently received the reply: "I don't know what you mean."

On one occasion the recruit paused to consider the question, and answered at last: "I'm not rightly sure."

"Oh," said my friend, "you must have some religion if you are coming into the army."

The recruit scratched his head thoughtfully, and

then the recollection of his religious denomination suddenly flashed into his mind.

"Please, sir, I'm a Prostitute!" he exclaimed.

And yet we send missionaries abroad. Even the poor Jewish soldier in Russia knows better than that.

CHAPTER VII

THE TREATMENT OF THE JEWS

In the short account of the Jews in Russia which I have given, I have endeavoured in a few words to describe their characteristics and modes of life. It is a subject on which many volumes could be written, but to give more than the merest sketch of the Jews in Russia is outside the scope of this book. Before leaving them, however, it would be instructive to take note of the relations which exist between them and the Government and their fellow subjects in Russia.

How dearly the Tsar loves this peaceable race within his borders we have seen from the great solicitude which he exhibits for their education. For their health he is equally careful. Jews are not allowed to bathe in rivers and lakes, nor are they permitted to go to seaside watering-places, sanatoriums, or mineral wells. They must reside in the Jewish quarters of the towns, and are not allowed to go to the more salubrious suburbs to live, even if it is necessary for their health. If a Jew wishes to consult a medical practitioner who lives in some other town he cannot do so unless he obtains permission from the police.

Then the popes of the Holy Russian Church stir

up the ignorant and superstitious moujiks against the Jews, and massacres are the result. Remember, the pope is the property of the Synod, and the Synod belongs to the Tsar. The chain of responsibility is complete, and it is easy to lay the blame on the right man.

There are police and soldiers looking on at the slaughter, even if they do not join in with the moujiks. The army and the police belong to the Tsar. The chain of responsibility is complete, and it is easy to lay the blame on the right man.

After it is all over, and some hundreds of Jews have been killed and their women dishonoured before death, there is possibly a mock inquiry into the circumstances, and the lawyers who speak inadvisedly are sent to Vladikavkas. Justice also belongs to the Tsar. The chain of responsibility is complete, and it is easy to lay the blame on the right man.

Has the world forgotten the massacres in Kieff in 1880, 1881, and 1882, or in Kharkoff in 1882, or in Warsaw in 1881, or in Novgorod in 1884, or in Kischinieff and Gomel in 1903? In Kieff the houses of the Jews were fired and pillaged. The children were torn from their mothers' breasts and dashed to pieces before their eyes. Four hundred souls were destroyed in two days. And whilst the smoke of Kieff rose to heaven and her streets ran red with blood, in a Jewish town, seventy *versts* away, a fanatic priest was inflaming the passions of the moujiks against the Jews. He told a story that the Jews had stolen a Christian child, and would

use his blood for their Passover. Not a Jewish family was left alive in the place.

Then at the massacre at Kischinieff last year the scenes of horror surpassed even those at Kieff. The young Jewish girls were outraged before the eyes of their parents. One frantic woman tore herself from her captors and rushed to her daughter's rescue, but a blow from the butt of a soldier's rifle scattered her brains. The Pristav and the Politzmaister, with police and soldiery, looked on at the slaughter. It is significant that the woman should have been killed with a soldier's rifle. Doubtless the Government officials who were present were able to supply a full report of the proceedings to St. Petersburg.

The Kischinieff affair struck horror to the Christian world. There were protests from England and America. And then? Nothing.

A tardy investigation was held, and a mock trial of a few of the murderers is apparently still in progress. In a newspaper of the 26th of February, 1904, it is stated that sixty-eight persons are now on trial in connection with the affair. But as one of the prisoners, who was found guilty of murder, was sentenced to one year's imprisonment, and another to undergo two and a half years service in a disciplinary company, it is obvious that the whole trial is nothing but a sham. Apparently all the civil actions for damages have been dismissed.

The charitable Christian reader comfortably ensconced by his own fireside wearies of this tale of horrors, and mutters: "Oh, nonsense! The man is

a fanatic, or a Russian Nihilist. The whole thing is exaggerated and overdone."

O comfortable and charitable Christian reader! go to Russia and see for yourself. Or, if that is too much trouble, turn up the files of the newspapers and read. If you have used all your old newspapers to light the fire by which you sit in judgment on the world at large, and if you are too lazy to go to the nearest public library to consult the files, then take the word of one of your own race, whose only connection with Russia is, that he has lived in that country for nine years for the purpose of finding out the truth.*

The question which I wish to put to every fair-minded man and woman is this: Suppose that the Jews had a kingdom of their own, and that they treated the Christians within their gates with a mere fraction of the barbarity which Russia metes out to the Jews, how long would it be before the Christian world interfered?

But Russia is known as a Christian country—and the Jew is a Jew—and does not count. That is the view of the Christian world. And in proof of it, what do we see at this moment? The Christian Russia authorised by the Powers to coerce the Turk to decent behaviour towards the Armenians.

Now Turkey does not pretend to Christianity, and the rule of the Sultan may not be all that is admirable. But his treatment of the Armenians is not one whit worse than the treatment of the Jews by Russia. There is this difference, the Jew is a

* See Appendix.

peaceful and law-abiding subject; but the Armenian, though he wears the badge of Christianity, is a murderer and cut-throat at heart, and has brought the trouble on himself.

But because the Turk is a Mahommedan and the Armenian a Christian, therefore Christian Russia, who murders the Jews by thousands, is deputed by the rest of Christianity to suppress the Turk.

Can any modern historian find a parallel in Turkish history to the savagery of Russia? Or can he name any man who has been girded with the sword of Osman in the Mosque of Ejub in Constantinople who can compare with the "Gods on Earth" of the past sixty years in blood-guiltiness and oppression?

What Sultan of Turkey has ever commanded the suppression of the language and history of a vassal State? What Sultan has prohibited the education of a section of his subjects? What Sultan has restricted the benefits of medical science, and closed his sanatoriums and watering-places to a section of his subjects? What Sultan has ordered the massacre of his own subjects without provocation? What Sultan has tortured children to convert them to his faith, making them kneel upon sacks half-filled with shot for eighteen hours a day, until they embraced Mahommedanism, and caused those who would not be converted to be knouted to death between the ranks of his soldiers?

Eighteen thousand children were destroyed in two years in the name of Christ in the time of Nicholas I.

What Sultan has released murderers from jail to swell the ranks of his religion? What Sultan has condoned the wholesale slaughter of the unoffending and peaceful inhabitants of a frontier town, as Nicholas II. condoned the bloody massacre of Blagovestshensk in 1900?

The massacre of Blagovestshensk surpasses for savage ferocity anything in the history of the Middle Ages. So great was the slaughter of men and women and children that the Amur river was choked with corpses for many miles. By order of General Gribsky the wretched Chinese inhabitants of the town were driven by thousands into the river; and those who would not enter the water were murdered in cold blood on the bank by the Cossacks. The deputy Pristav Shabanov looked on at this orgie of massacre until his gorge rose against it, and, sickened by a surfeit of bloody horrors, he was forced to turn away. In Blagovestshensk and the surrounding country more than 15,000 inoffensive Chinese were slaughtered.

On hearing of the massacre I went to Blagovestshensk, being at the time five days journey from that place. I arrived on July 21, 1900, and remained there for three weeks. During the whole time I was there corpses of the murdered Chinese were floating down the river.

It is superfluous to multiply the deeds of savagery and barbarism which have been committed in Russia during the reigns of Nicholas I., Alexander II., Alexander III., and Nicholas II. in the last sixty years. The amiable British statesman who professes

to be a connoisseur of "methods of barbarism," and a champion of the outraged Armenian, should go to Russia or to his Armenian *protégés* to learn the real meaning of the word "barbarism," and then return home and apologise to the British army for applying the term to the conduct of the war in South Africa.

He would find that his Armenian brothers, together with the Roumanians, Servians, and Bulgarians, are ruffians who have been schooled in the science of murder from the cradle; and that when Turkey deals out justice to them, they shriek the name of Christ to the civilised world and implore her aid, crying: "Come over to Macedonia and help us."

And because they shelter their crimes under the cloak of Christianity the civilised world is appalled, and falls into hysterics; and implores Russia and Austria to interfere and stop it.

I do not wish to associate myself with the methods of the Turk, or to hold the Sultan up as a model of what a ruler should be. But I would rather a thousand times be a Turk or even a Hottentot than a gentle Christian of Russia, Roumania, Bulgaria, Servia, or Armenia.

The position of the civilised world, then, is this: that the Armenians must be preserved even at the cost of a European conflagration, because they are Christians. But the Jews may be ruthlessly massacred, and left to their fate, because they are Jews.

That is the logical conclusion of the matter; and there is only one other admission possible, and that

is not a creditable one to the civilised world, namely: that the nations are afraid of Russia. Those are the only alternatives, and I leave it to the reader to ponder over, and to decide for himself which is the true one.

PART III

A POWER ABOVE THE TSAR

CHAPTER I

I REVISIT RUSSIA IN A HURRY

THE narrative which I am about to relate concerns many people in Russia and in other parts of the world, most of whom are alive, and I trust well, at this moment. It is probable that if this book falls into the hands of any of them, they will recognise themselves under strange names, in strange places, and at strange times. For this is a true story; and, therefore, out of consideration for those who are my friends in Russia, and for those whose assistance I obtained by other means than friendship, I have suppressed all names of persons, changed the names of towns and governments, and altered the date of the occurrences. It is therefore impossible that those who took part in the affair can be compromised by the relation of it now.

My object in telling this story is not to pose as the hero of it; for, in fact, the credit is not due to me, but to the almighty Russian rouble. It is, as I have said, a true story and not fiction, and, therefore,

no hero is necessary. But I tell it because it is a story with a moral, and moral tales are always instructive however unpalatable.

The moral is this: that if you have an object in view in Russia, you can always attain to it, however impossible it may appear, by the help of the rouble. There is another moral which I recommend to the notice of the relations and friends of those who are involuntary residents in Siberia and Vladikavkas, and it is this: that any man who is undergoing a sentence of penal servitude in Siberia or Vladikavkas can be liberated with outside help and a sufficiency of roubles.

The story has also a moral for the Tsar himself, namely: that there is a power in Russia above the "God on Earth," and it takes the form of a substantial silver coin.

In the year 1896 I was returning from Vera Cruz, Mexico, and arrived in San Francisco in March. At the Palace Hotel, where I had rooms, I found a bundle of letters, which had accumulated for three weeks past, awaiting me. Among the letters was a cablegram marked *vid* Eydtkuhnen. I tore it open and read: "If possible come earlier to St. Petersburg, Kolka in trouble."

There was no signature and the cablegram was dated February 24. I knew well enough who the sender was; but the fact that the cablegram had been awaiting my arrival for a fortnight caused me considerable uneasiness. I went hastily through the bundle of letters, in the hope of finding one from the sender of the message, which would

throw more light on the subject; but there was none.

It had been my intention to start for Russia, on a visit to some friends in St. Petersburg and Kasan, later in the spring; but that cablegram decided me to start forthwith, and I made arrangements for an immediate departure.

I left San Francisco by the midnight express the same evening, and on the third day arrived at the Windy City—Chicago. There I determined to stay for a day, for there was a man in Chicago whom I wanted to see. I found him at the Iroquois Club. I told him that I was on my way to St. Petersburg, and asked if he could give me letters of introduction to certain medical officers in high official positions there. It is always well to go to a foreign country well furnished with introductions, and in the present instance I thought it very possible that I should require all the influence I could get.

My friend readily assented; and I left Chicago, early the following morning, with his letters in my pocket.

At Washington I again broke my journey. I had friends there, too, who had influence in Russia, and from them I received an important letter of introduction to a high official in Odessa. The next day I arrived in New York, and secured a berth in the White Star liner *Germanic*, which was due to sail in a few days time.

I thought that voyage across the Atlantic would never end. The enforced inactivity of life on board ship was exasperating. A voice from out of Russia

had called me, to I knew not what. But the call was imperative and I longed to be there. The great, green waves of the Atlantic rose like huge walls in endless succession to bar the way; and the good ship *Germanic* climbed them conscientiously and steadily, gathering her strength on the downward dip to struggle up the vast incline beyond.

The captain was an old friend of mine, and my seat at table was next to his; but I am afraid he found me very dull company during that trip. "Come earlier—Kolka in trouble." I could only speculate on the real meaning of the words; but my speculations absorbed me to the exclusion of all other subjects.

On the ninth day we arrived at Liverpool, and I started at once for London. It was a relief to be active again. So long as I could "hustle around," getting my passport and letters of introduction, and making final arrangements for my expedition, I was happy. In three days I had my passport and everything in readiness; and after sending three telegrams, one to St. Petersburg, one to Moscow, and a third to Vyatka, I left London to travel *vid* Berlin and Eydtkuhnen to St. Petersburg.

At the Russian frontier the spirit of the country in which I had spent so many years of my life came back to me. The official who inspected my passport found a five-rouble note pinned to the back of it; and, in consequence, my luggage was passed through the custom house unopened, and I was allowed to proceed on my journey unmolested. The next day I reached St. Petersburg.

M. Renault, of the Hotel de France, welcomed me with effusion. He had received my telegram and was awaiting me in my room.

I had scarcely sat down when I was interrupted by the sound of voices in the passage without. The porter was firm, he would not admit any one to the Bareen's room without first giving notice of his arrival.

"Wait here, your High-born, until I have taken your card to the Bareen."

The visitor declined to wait, but he was evidently in the dilemma of not knowing which room to enter. At this juncture I opened the door of my room and came out into the passage.

In a moment I was seized in the embrace of the visitor. His hands, like a great bear's paws, hugged my shoulders; he kissed me on both cheeks, and his venerable grey beard swept against my face; he talked and laughed and cried in the same breath. The porter looked on in amazement, and then discreetly withdrew. But still the old man held me in his arms, as though he would assure himself that it was in very truth Carl Joubert who stood before him.

At last I led him into my room, still clinging to my arm.

"So you have come—you have really come!" he exclaimed.

"I should have been here a fortnight ago," I said, "if I had received your cablegram earlier. But I was away from San Francisco when it arrived."

Then I told him of my journey across two

continents and the Atlantic. I showed him the cablegram stamped with the date that I received it from the Palace Hotel. I explained to him how it had been delayed at Los Angelos, California, to which address he had originally directed it. In fact, I made every imaginable excuse for the tardiness of my arrival. I would not have him think that for one moment I had hesitated to respond to his call, "Come earlier—Kolka in trouble."

He heard me to the end without a word, sitting bolt upright on the edge of his chair, grasping his knees in his great, strong hands, and looking into my face with a half-dazed expression in his eyes, as though he could not realise that I had come. Then, all at once, he leaned back in his chair, and his limbs relaxed, and he began to cry like a child.

I could see the tears rolling from his grey beard like drops of dew in spite of the big hands that covered his face. How the veins stood out on the backs of those hands! And between the gusts of tears he cried pitifully: "Kolka—my poor Kolka!"

CHAPTER II

KOLKA

But the impatient reader, who hates mysteries at the outset of a story, is no doubt anxiously demanding "who is Kolka? What is his trouble? What has the old man to do with it? And what business is it at all of the author of this book?"

Then let me explain.

Maximov Bogdanovitch, whom we left overcome by his feelings in the Hotel de France, St. Petersburg, is known as a great doctor of medicine. His experience stretches over a period of forty years. He has taken many degrees, among others M.D. of London, and he is a Fellow of the Royal Society. In his younger days he was a great traveller. But for the last thirty years he has seldom left his estate in Vyatka, and has not journeyed beyond the borders of Russia. His estate is large, but his income is by no means commensurate with it. He could have become rich, if he had desired it, by the practice of medicine; but for the last forty years he has not made a kopek from his practice, for reasons of his own. He treats all comers free of charge, be they Christians, Jews, Tartars, or Mahommedans. He has been excommunicated from the Greek Church; and when he is not attending to his patients he is

engaged with his microscope or in the study of pathology.

His family consists of three daughters and one son. One of his daughters is married to a doctor who has a good practice at Mentone. The other two are unmarried and live at home. The two unmarried daughters guard their father with a jealous care. They keep house for him, and will allow no servant to wait upon him, preferring to attend to all his wants themselves. They are well educated girls, and very musical, and as charming as they are accomplished. The son's name is Alexander; but he is always called "Kolka." At the time of which I speak he was thirty-four years old.

So much for Dr. Bogdanovitch and Kolka. It remains to be explained how I became an intimate in their household.

In my student days I met Kolka at the University of Heidelberg. We were both studying medicine; and I was first attracted to him by his fine qualities. He was a great lover of nature; he was absolutely unselfish; he would never take advantage of a weaker fellow student; he was good-natured to the point of carelessness; he was clever at his work, and he had a respect and love for the memory of his mother, who was dead, which was very touching.

We became friends, and he would often talk to me without reserve about his mother. She would have wished him to do this; he had promised her never to do that. He shaped his life on the influence which she had left behind her. If I advised a certain course of action, he would pause before

adopting it, and I knew what was passing in his mind. Then, when he declared quite frankly that he did not approve of my suggestion I felt reproved, though there was never a thought of reproof in his mind, nor a word to show that he resented my proposal.

His ambition was to become a doctor, like his father, and to treat all his patients gratuitously. But he dreaded Russia and the idea of succeeding his father to the estates in Vyatka.

"Do you think that I should be allowed to set up a free practice in your land of Johnny Bull?" he would ask me sometimes. He always called England "The land of Johnny Bull." It was a mild form of wit perhaps; but there was not a particle of malice in it.

In the vacations I would invite him to my home in England. Sometimes he came. Then the old doctor would write me charming letters, and express the hope that I would some day pay him a visit in Vyatka.

Kolka was beloved of all who met him. His very diffidence was attractive, more especially to the weaker sex, in whose presence he would be covered with confusion.

But this is hardly fair to you, Kolka—is it? I have started to tell your story without your permission; and the least I can do is to spare your blushes. So I will leave your many good qualities alone, and go on with the narrative.

The first time that I visited Dr. Bogdanovitch's home in Vyatka a great friendship sprang up between the whole family and myself. I was made to

understand that I was to look upon the house and the inmates as my own home and people. When Kolka and I left Vyatka to return to Heidelberg it was a sad day for us all. But that was only the first of many visits to Vyatka.

After we had both taken our degrees at the university, Kolka went to Moscow to practise medicine; and I wandered over Rússia, visiting every part of the vast Empire, and studying the manners and customs of her peoples. In the course of my wanderings I often found myself back in Vyatka. And the intimacy which had begun in my student days was continued during the whole nine years that I spent in Russia.

Then I determined to go home again for a time. But I had acquired a roving disposition and I did not remain at home for very long. There are other countries in the world besides England and Russia, and I wanted to see them and find out something about them for myself. So I left my home and travelled for several years in the American continent. And during all my wanderings I kept up a correspondence with the Bogdanovitches in Vyatka.

And this brings me up to the day when I received the cablegram at the Palace Hotel, San Francisco.

When the old doctor had recovered his self-possession in my room at the Hotel de France, I asked him anxiously about Kolka. What had he done? And what had become of him?

The old man told me the whole story.

Kolka was practising in Moscow, where he had

made himself unpopular with the authorities by constantly bringing to their notice the fact that the restrictions of the benefits of medical science, which were imposed on the Jews, were a scandal and a disgrace to civilisation. When the authorities ignored his communications he wrote openly on the subject. That was too much for the authorities with whom he was already unpopular, not only on account of his views but also because his father was an excommunicant from the Church.

Then a riot broke out among the students at the university, and the authorities saw their opportunity. Kolka was charged with instigating the students to riot. The rest, of course, was easy for the authorities, and Kolka was sentenced to five years' penal servitude in Siberia.

The fate of Kolka has been the fate of thousands and thousands of innocent men in Russia. But it is only when the iniquity of the sentence is brought home to us by the infliction of it on those who are dear to us that we experience the full measure of indignation and impotent wrath against the system of government which makes such outrages possible.

To grind the teeth and swear oaths of vengeance, to clench the hands until the nails cut into the flesh of the palms and curse the Tsar, to weep copious tears and cry aloud for mercy—all are in vain. Nothing can assuage our burning sense of injustice or lift one link of the chain that drags upon the limbs of our beloved one.

Oh, the bitterness and gall of man's injustice! Let God in his mercy afflict us with misfortune and

pain; but God send that we fall not into the burning pit of human injustice.

As I looked at the bowed head of the venerable old man before me, who in faltering words told the story of his son's persecution and banishment, I determined that it was impossible to sit down meekly under the lash of the "God on Earth." It was not to be thought of; something must be done.

So when Dr. Bogdanovitch asked me to return with him to Vyatka I gave him at once to understand that I had not come to Russia on this occasion to pay visits, for I had important business on hand to which I must immediately attend.

He looked at me narrowly, and I could see that he understood what I meant, though he said nothing.

"And now, doctor," I said, "you must go home to Vyatka, and give my kindest remembrances to your daughters. Tell them I am in Russia for the purposes of pathological research. You must expect no letters from me, and I cannot give you any fixed address to which to write. But you may expect me when you see me."

He kissed me and implored me to be careful, and we parted, he to his home in Vyatka and I back to my room in the Hotel de France.

CHAPTER III

I BECOME A RUSSIAN PATHOLOGIST

I RANG the bell and told the waiter to bring me a *samovar*. There is something companionable and friendly about a Russian *samovàr*. He sits on the table in front of you buzzing and fuming good-naturedly; and as you watch the steam pouring from the air holes and vanishing into space, and listen to the varied assortment of noises with which he enlivens the tedium of his work, you gain confidence in his abilities and look to him for counsel; and he will help you to think.

Therefore, after I had said farewell to the old doctor, I drew up a comfortable chair and sat down to consult my trusty friend the *samovar*.

The first thing he told me was that I was engaged on a dangerous venture, and that I would do well to bear in mind my old friend's warning to be careful. He reminded me of this with a great deal of unnecessary groaning and bubbling. I informed him that it was quite superfluous to gird at me on that point, and if he had nothing more practical to suggest that he had better look sharp and boil, and have done with it. Then, he suddenly pitched his note higher and came to business:

"What's your name?" he asked.

I thought before replying. It would be as well to change my name perhaps; so I answered him:

"My name is Denman."

"I suppose it is on your passport," said the *samovar*.

Here was a difficulty; for my passport bore the name of Joubert, and it would be quite impossible for me to persuade the British or the American Ambassador to make me out a fresh passport in the name of Denman, I was known to both of them as Joubert.

The *samovar* saw that he had scored a point, and laughed until his lid clattered.

"If you are going to change your name," he said at last, "why not change your nationality at the same time? What is to prevent you from becoming a Russian?"

"But the Russian must have a passport just the same," I objected.

"I should have thought," said the *samovar*, with a disdainful hiss, "that you had lived long enough in Russia to know that any Russian can obtain a passport on payment. That friend of yours on the Lithuanian border could arrange that for you."

"Very well, then," I answered, "my name is Denmanovitch."

The *samovar* chuckled uproariously.

"And how are you going to get money from the banks? The cashiers will never allow Denmanovitch to draw on Carl Joubert's account; and without money you can do nothing in this country."

That *samovar* is a level-headed fellow. What he

said was perfectly true. My letter of credit was for 10,000 roubles, and I had already spent nearly a thousand. I should want more money, and I must get it all in notes, and carry it about with me.

"I shall send a telegram to London at once," I said, "telling my bankers to wire me back 40,000 roubles."

"Now you are talking!" exclaimed the *samovar*. With that he relapsed into a tranquil silence, and I knew that my tea was ready.

The same evening I went out and sent the telegram. Then I walked from one shop to another in St. Petersburg to find some receptacle in which to carry my money. An ingenious tradesman in Mala Marskaja designed a belt for me. It was four inches wide and lined with fine kid leather; it was divided into pockets, and a flap covered the openings of the pockets, and was fastened with small buttons at the bottom of the belt. In this belt I calculated that I should be able to carry my 50,000 roubles in small notes. I promised the tradesman a substantial bonus if he would undertake to deliver the belt to me on the following day; and I left his shop with the title of Grand Duke, and returned to the Hotel de France.

At the hotel I found several friends, English and American, waiting for me. They had seen my name in the list of arrivals at St. Petersburg hotels in the Paris edition of the New York *Herald*. That I had come to Russia in the month of April seemed a matter for surprise.

"Well," said an American, "for what have you come to this God-forsaken country at this season?"

"My dear friend," I answered, "you are surely

mistaken. Russia is not God-forsaken—she is Holy Russia."

I invited them all to supper with me at the hotel, and it was late when we parted. I could not help wondering what their opinion of me would have been had they known the thoughts which were in my head. I think they would have kept me a prisoner in my room and wired to my people in England to come at once, bringing a strait-waistcoat with them.

On the following afternoon, at about three o'clock, I once more returned to the hotel and locked myself into my room and hung a hat over the keyhole. Then I opened a thick bundle of notes, and counted out 49,000 roubles in all kinds and values and in every shade of colour, engraved with portraits of the rulers of Russia from Catherine to Alexander III. These I deposited in the safe of the proprietor of the hotel pending the arrival of the belt from the Mala Marskaja, and went out again. At a druggist's shop I completed my medicine chest, and bought several hundred pathological glass slides and some spare lenses for my microscope. There was no difficulty about supplying as much pure morphine and prussic acid as I required, and I completed my outfit with forceps and other surgical appliances.

The next day I left St. Petersburg and took the train for a certain town on the Lithuanian border, which shall be nameless. I will only so far indicate its position by stating that the journey occupied two days in a train, which was abominably slow for the last 200 miles of the journey.

And once more I was seated in front of a *samovar* in a hotel sitting-room, but I did not seek its advice. I was waiting for a certain friend of mine, an *Ispravnik* (district chief of police), a man whom I had known for many years and with whom I was on the terms of the greatest intimacy.

Presently I heard the clank of his sword on the stairs, and in another moment he held me in his embrace, kissing me on both cheeks, as is the custom of his country. There were many questions to be asked and answered concerning the health and well-being of his family and of myself. And when the preliminary salutations were over, Dimitri Stankevitch demanded an explanation of my presence in the hotel.

"Your little sister will never forgive you for staying at a hotel when our house is always ready for you," he said. His wife was known amongst us as "my little sister," and one of his children was my god-son.

"Sit down and hear what I have to say," I answered, "and then you will understand why I am in this hotel instead of at your house."

He took off his sword and his great Nicholaievski coat and threw them across a chair.

"Go on, my boy," he said.

I told my story from the beginning, omitting no particulars. Dimitri Stankevitch had met Kolka on several occasions in my company, but he had not heard of his fate until I told him.

"Well, what are you going to do?" he asked.

"I am going to take him out. Do you understand?"

"Oh, yes, I understand well enough," he answered slowly, "but how do you propose to set about it?"

"I thought at first of trying to work it through the officials in St. Petersburg," I replied, "but the Tsar and the Procurator and the Holy Synod are dead against him because his father is an excommunicant, and I don't think it is of any use to waste my time and money in that quarter. I suppose, therefore, I shall have to try some other means. Now do you understand?"

I slapped him between his broad shoulders as I put the question.

"I see that your hands are still strong and able," he answered dryly. Then for a few minutes he was silent, and I could see that he was deep in thoughts which evidently were vexatious to him, for a frown setttled down on his face. At last he spoke again.

"Then I suppose you have come here to say good-bye to us for ever. When next we meet it will be with the 'Boje Materi' in heaven."

"Not at all, my friend," I answered. "I have every intention of coming back to you here, and of tasting that excellent kolbash and kapusta which your cook alone knows how to prepare."

I think he resented my levity, for he muttered something about the English regarding nothing as sacred except their horses and dogs, and inquiring the name of the Derby winner with their dying breath.

"And you are going to the end of the world to try and rescue Kolka," he continued, "in the same spirit as you would sit down to your beef-steak

pudding. If your little sister knew of it she would die."

"But there is no need for her to know anything about it. I shall not tell her."

"Nor I," he assented gravely. He evidently regarded my attempt with the utmost disapproval, and I was anxious to convince him of its feasibility. So I took off my belt and handed it to him.

"That is what I am relying upon to effect my purpose," I said. "You can count it, and tell me if it will be enough."

Dimitri Stankevitch knew as well as I the power of the rouble throughout Russia, and when he had counted the contents of my belt I do not think that he regarded my venture in quite such a hopeless light.

"I want you to take it home with you and keep it safely for me," I said. "In a hotel like this it is rather an anxiety, and it will be a relief to have it off my body for a few days."

"But you did not come to Lithuania for the purpose of giving me your money to take care of," said the *Ispravnik*, taking the belt from my hands. "What else can I do?"

"I thought you could tell me where to get passports," I said. "I want some blank ones that I can fill in for myself."

"I can get you them," he answered readily.

"No, no, my friend," I exclaimed. I will not take them from you. If there is going to be trouble over the matter I am not going to let you in for it. I only want you to tell me to whom I should apply."

He took out his pocket-book and wrote a name and address on a leaf, which he tore out and gave to me, saying:

"I should not advise you to show him the contents of your belt!"

I laughed at the notion of exposing so much money to the avaricious eyes of the official whose name was inscribed on the paper in my hand. I knew his class too well for that!

The *Ispravnik* rose and began to buckle on his sword again.

"Come to supper," he said. "The little sister will be flattening her nose against the window looking for you."

We walked together to his house. On the way Dimitri Stankevitch became more cheerful about my prospects of success.

"You may succeed in getting him out," he admitted; "but how are you going to quit the country afterwards?"

"That will be easy enough," I replied. "I shall have a few passports in my pocket."

"Well!" he exclaimed, laughing. "You are nothing but a 'bradjaga' (tramp)!"

"I have been a 'bradjaga' all my life," I answered, "and I am beginning to know something of the road."

With that we arrived at his house and the "little sister" welcomed me warmly; and my god-son rushed at me like a whirlwind, calling me "my father." We spent a very happy evening together, and no word was said of the reason of my visit to the Lithuanian border.

The next day I had an interview with a tall, long-bearded official of the Meschanskaia Uprava. From him I obtained four passports and four "chorosho povidenias" for the sum of 275 roubles. The "chorosho povidenia" is a State or Government good reference; it is sometimes a more useful document than a passport, and in large cities it is a necessity for Russians; but it is never used by foreigners.

I made out one passport and one "chorosho povidenia" for myself. In the passport I figured as Albert Denmanovitch. Age 32. Hair black. Chin prominent; eyes brown, &c. Profession, Doctor of Medicine and Specialist. From the Lithuanian Government, City——

My "chorosho povidenia" stated that I had, by my medical skill, cured all manner of diseases on the Lithuanian border, and almost raised people from their graves. Then followed the Government stamp and seals.

I stowed away my documents in the belt along with the roubles. And when I took leave of the obliging official, I was to all intents and purposes a Russian subject, with a leaning towards pathological research.

A few days afterwards I called upon my "little sister" to say farewell. I pretended that I was going on a yachting cruise in the Baltic, starting from Riga; and said that I might not have an opportunity of writing to her for some time. The kind little lady was sad at my departure, and baked all manner of cakes for me to take on my trip. I

felt thoroughly ashamed of myself. But Dimitri Stankevitch stood by with set jaws and not a sign on his face to betray the least emotion. He told his wife that he would accompany me for a short distance on the railway, and would probably return that night.

So we left the house together; and "my little sister" stood on the steps fluttering her tiny handkerchief to us until we were out of sight.

On the way to the station Dimitri never uttered a word, and it was not until we had taken our places in the carriage, and the third bell had rung for the train to start, that he spoke. He began by assuring me of his devotion; but that I had never doubted. Then he expressed his sorrow for having thrown cold water on my scheme when we had first spoken of it at the hotel; and he assured me that if, through this venture, I should find myself in the same boat as Kolka, he would risk all to save me, in spite of his wife and children.

He was deeply moved, and the tears were in his eyes when he made me this promise, and I was convinced that he would abide loyally by it if the worst should happen. However, I would not hear of failure, and could not see where the great danger he apprehended lay. I had only to find Kolka, and then bribe heavily until I had bought his freedom.

So I made light of it to Dimitri; but he still regarded me with a kindly, grave face, and implored me to be careful. Then he produced a bundle of letters from his pocket and handed them to me.

"I want you to use these," he said, "if you need them."

They were letters of introduction to fourteen officials in Siberia, giving my name as Dr. Denmanovitch.

"Some of them are to men whom I have never seen," he continued; "but when you have time I should like you to read them, and make use of any that may help you."

I thanked him, and promised that I would use them if necessary. He was relieved at my acceptance of the letters.

"I thought you would not take them," he said; "but you need not scruple to use these men to your own advantage. They are nothing to me, and I care little for any of them—but I do care for you."

At the next station we separated. I promised to write to him whenever I could without danger; and he told me that I should hear from him at Moscow and Ekaterinaburg.

CHAPTER IV

DR. DENMANOVITCH

I WAS back in St. Petersburg in two days, but I did not go to the Hotel de France. I had no wish to meet any of my friends again, and I was only in St. Petersburg for one night. So I went to a hotel near the station, and on the following day I started for Moscow.

I was no longer Carl Joubert, but Dr. Denmanovitch, the specialist. I had not shaved myself since I embarked on the *Germanic* at New York a month ago, and my beard was nearly full grown and shaping itself in the true Russian fashion. My hair and eyes are dark and my cheek-bones high, so it was an easy matter to pass myself off as a Russian in appearance. As to the language, I speak Russian with almost greater facility than English, and any accent in pronunciation is unnoticed in Russia, where the language spoken in one part differs widely from that of another. But if, in spite of my physical and linguistic advantages, any one questioned my nationality, had I not my passport and *chorosho povidenia* to prove my identity up to the hilt?

My only fear was that old acquaintances might recognise me in Moscow, and, therefore, I avoided

the haunts of the foreigner and the houses of my friends. I would have avoided Moscow altogether if it had been possible; but there I had to stay until I could find out to what part of the world they had transported my Kolka.

Among the letters of introduction which Dimitri had given me at the last moment was one addressed to the Governor of Moscow. I made up my mind that I would go to see him, though it was not clear to me how I was to extract any information on the subject of the Siberian prisoners from him without arousing suspicion; but to remain inactive in Moscow was worse than useless. I must be prepared to take some risks if I am to find out and rescue Kolka, and, therefore, I would see what could be done with the Governor of Moscow.

So at eleven o'clock the following morning I presented myself at his Excellency's palace and sent in my letter of introduction. In less than five minutes I was shown into a well-appointed library. The Governor himself, a tall, upright man in uniform, came towards me.

"I thank you, doctor, for your call," he said graciously. "I see that you arrived in Moscow some days ago. I am sorry that you did not present yourself to me when you first arrived, so that I could have had the pleasure of making your acquaintance earlier."

Evidently Dimitri Stankevitch's introduction carried weight in this quarter.

I made some appropriate answer, and, seeing that he was busily engaged on his official duties, I rose

to take my leave. He came up to me and laid his hand on my shoulder.

"I hope you will dine with me, Dr. Denmanovitch, to-night at seven o'clock."

I readily accepted his invitation, and bowed myself out of the room. The corridors and passages were crowded with officers and uniformed officials waiting to transact their business with the Governor. I passed through them and out once more into the streets of White Moscow.

I hardly knew whether to be pleased with myself or not. Perhaps I might, with patience, extract some useful information from the Governor; on the other hand, I might simply be wasting my time.

I was at the palace punctually at seven o'clock. It was evidently an "official" dinner-party, for there were several notable men in gorgeous uniforms assembled when I arrived. His Excellency's wife was the only lady present, and my astonishment was great when I was requested to take her in to dinner. Most decidedly Dimitri's letter of introduction bore weight, and I had become a man of importance.

The conversation was carried on principally in French, as is usual in Russian "high life," and was of a general character. I was called upon by my neighbour to answer several embarrassing questions. How did I like Moscow? For how long was I staying? They are inquisitive people, the Russians, and they will always endeavour to find out all about a stranger by cross-examination, more especially when the stranger is treated as a man of importance.

I replied that I was in Moscow for the first time, and that my stay would not be of long duration, as I was visiting the hospitals in the larger towns throughout Russia.

After dinner there was some music. His Excellency's German governess had a fine voice, and she sang several songs to the delight of the company. I think I should have enjoyed that dinner-party if it had not been for the name of Denmanovitch. But saddled with a false name, to which I had not yet become accustomed, I felt ill at ease.

Before leaving, the Governor asked me it he could do anything to assist me in my researches. I thanked him for his kindness, and was hesitating in my mind whether or no I should ask for permission to visit the prisons, when he made the suggestion himself.

"Perhaps it might interest you to go round the prison wards," he said casually; "there is the 'Pugatchev,' you might find something there to interest you."

Again I thanked him, and accepted his offer with as little show of eagerness as possible. He wrote down my address, and promised to send a *dentchik* with the necessary permits to my hotel in the morning.

At half-past ten o'clock on the following morning an orderly presented himself with an oblong envelope in his hand. I took it from him, and he saluted and retired, whilst I hurriedly tore open the envelope.

And, behold, here was the permit for me to enter

and examine all the hospitals, prisons, and institutions in Moscow!

In the afternoon I hailed a *droshka* and drove to the Central Prison.

My permit, signed by the Governor, assured me of the most obsequious attention on the part of the prison staff. A warder and another official were told off to conduct me to every department, and give me any information I required.

I was shown the "Pugatchev" with its towers and strongholds where prisoners undergoing penal servitude for life are kept; then the cells of criminals who have been awarded lesser sentences; and, finally, the prisons where those who had been sentenced to penal servitude in Siberia are detained until there is a sufficient number to make up a *bolshoia partia*, or gang, for transport to their destination. It may easily be imagined with what anxiety I scanned the faces of the men in this department; and I hardly knew whether I was glad or sorry when I failed to find Kolka among them.

"How many prisoners a year do you send to Siberia?" I asked my guide.

"It is impossible for me to say, Bareen," the man answered. "Sometimes there are so many that we cannot find accommodation for them whilst they are awaiting transport. When the railway to Siberia is complete it will be a simple matter, and the prisons along the road will not then become so congested."

"And how many transports do you make in a year?" I asked.

"That is also a difficult question to answer. Two years ago we made only four transports; last year we had five. These men here will form the second this year."

I felt that I was upon the right track, and I continued my cross-examination.

"When did your last transportation take place?" I asked casually.

"About seven weeks ago, your High-born."

"Well," I said, "I cannot understand why people place themselves in such an unenviable position. But I suppose most of your prisoners are from the lowest order of the people."

The warder looked at me with an amused smile, he seemed to think me a very ingenuous person. Then he explained that nine-tenths of the prisoners for Siberia were "politicals," who are mostly highly educated men—lawyers, doctors, and students, and even professors.

"For my part," he said, "I am sometimes thankful that I am an uneducated man when I see to what education brings some of them. In our last transport for Siberia we had eighteen doctors, more than forty professors, and about eighty students. The common people are just the murderers and general criminals, but never those pestilent 'politicals.'"

I had found out all that I wanted from the prison. What remained to be discovered must be sought outside the grim walls of the *Krepost.* So I determined to leave Moscow, and to endeavour to overtake the "rota" of convicts who had seven weeks start of me on the Siberian road. If Kolka

had been already sent on, he must be with that "rota."

But before quitting Moscow I went once more to call on the Governor, and thanked him for his kindness. He was very cordial, and gave me a few letters of introduction, which were not of much importance, and bade me good-bye.

I returned to my hotel, where I found a letter awaiting me. It was in the handwriting of Dimitri Stankevitch, and the envelope was fastened down with four seals. I broke them open, and found a letter and an enclosure. The letter ran :

"You must leave Moscow at once and go to Yaroslaff, never mind what plans you have made. I enclose a letter of introduction to —— in Yaroslaff. Go to him as soon as you get there. Wire me to my office that you will do so."

So I went out to the telegraph office and wired :

"I start for Yaroslaff to-day in accordance with your instructions."

CHAPTER V

A MYSTERIOUS OLD GENTLEMAN

WHEN I arrived in Yaroslaff I wasted no time before going to the official for whom the *Ispravnik* had sent me a letter of introduction.

He was an elderly gentleman with eye-glasses, and he wore a long *surtuk* with gold epaulettes. He rose from his seat and greeted me kindly when I entered. Then he called his orderly.

"I can see nobody," he said to the man. "You understand, I am in to nobody "

He closed the door and led me to a comfortable corner, where we both sat down. He opened the conversation with the usual kind inquiries after my health; and then he astonished me slightly by asking how his Excellency the Governor of Moscow had treated me, and whether his wife and family were well.

I told him how kind his Excellency had been, and that he had asked me to dinner at the palace, and given me permits to visit the hospitals and prisons in Moscow. Then I launched forth on other topics. All the time I was talking the old man sat quite silent, looking me through and through. When at last I came to the end of my remarks he looked me straight in the eyes, and said :

"Doctor, you have made up your mind to find a certain political prisoner?"

His words staggered me. There were only two men in all Russia who knew of my determination, Dr. Bogdanovitch and Dimitri Stankevitch—and I was absolutely certain that neither of them would betray me. But this affable old gentleman spoke with the utmost confidence of my intentions. To deny the truth of his statement would be futile; but I must not commit myself. So I answered:

"Yes, sir."

"Of course," he continued, "I am not asking what your intentions may be after you have met that particular political prisoner. But I can assure you that you need fear nothing from me. I happen to know all about it. I used to know old Dr. Bogdanovitch fifteen years ago—I remember him well."

He paused, as though his mind were carried back by a train of recollections into the past.

"If I may be allowed, I will offer you my advice," he continued at last.

I begged him to proceed.

"Young Dr. Bogdanovitch has been sentenced to five years in Siberia 'voilnoie poselenia' (*i.e.*, transportation without hard labour and without confinement in prison). He, in fact, will not have a hard time of it at all. Being a doctor he may be favoured in many ways. Under the circumstances is it worth while to interfere?"

I stated emphatically that I considered it worth while, and that I intended to take young Dr. Bogdanovitch out of Russia.

He laughed good-naturedly at my enthusiasm, and admitted candidly that there may be happier lands than Russia to live in.

"But, I warn you," he said, "that you must be prepared to rough it if you are going to find him. You will have to travel beyond the limits of the railways, and the roads are bad."

"I am prepared to walk all the way if necessary," I answered.

"Very good, my friend," he continued, and I knew that he was convinced of my determination, "since you are bent on it, may I still offer my advice?"

I expressed myself grateful, and he went on.

"First, then, you must make straight for Irkutsk, though your friend may not arrive there for several months. Secondly, under no circumstances must you try to intercept your friend on the road. You may not endanger yourself by doing so, but you will endanger your friend, and render your mission abortive. I will give you a letter of introduction to the Governor-General of Irkutsk, and you must do all you can to get in his good graces—there are a hundred ways of doing that. And you must continue your scientific researches, and thereby gain entry into any place you choose. Lastly, and most important of all, let your name be what it really is, and your country too. Let your name be Carl Joubert, of England, and not Dr. Denmanovitch, of Lithuania. And let it be so from this time forth. As to the rest," the old man concluded kindly, "may the Master and Great Architect of the World help you."

I was already past the stage of articulate surprise; I could only wonder vaguely to myself how it was that this man knew, not only of my plans but also my name and nationality. That he was kindly disposed towards me there was no doubt in my mind; that I must act upon his advice was imperatively impressed upon me by the letter which I had received from Dimitri Stankevitch. What troubled me was the uncertainty as to the source from which the old gentleman had obtained his information. If Dimitri had made a confidant of him alone, all was well. But there was a dread in my mind that possibly Dimitri had communicated my story to him through a third party, and had thus put the fate of Kolka and myself at the mercy of some man who might, in his cups or out of them, betray our secret.

Perhaps it was an unworthy thought on my part; but I argued—if Dimitri had told my story to the old official at Yaroslaff then why not to another? If three people knew it, then why not the Tsar and the whole of Russia? My anxiety on this point was very great, and I was resolved that I must find out the truth before I left Yaroslaff.

Three days after my interview with the official I received an invitation from him to dinner. I accepted it gladly, as I should probably thus have an opportunity of questioning him on the subject.

I found that the old gentleman was from the Baltic provinces. He was born in Mitau, and came of an old aristocratic German family. He had received a good education, and had served in the

army, being promoted step by step until he attained to the exalted position which he then held. He was a man of refinement and gentle disposition, very unlike the sealed pattern official bully so common throughout Russia.

His wife was also of German extraction. She came from Window, about seven miles from Mitau, and was the daughter of a certain Baron Popp who owned a large estate in Kourland. There were also present at dinner several of their children, most of whom were grown up, and already serving in the army.

When I entered the whole family was speaking German, but out of courtesy to me it was suggested that the conversation should be carried on in French or Russian. However, I told them that it was quite unnecessary, as I spoke German very comfortably.

The opportunity of questioning my host on the subject of my enterprise came after dinner. The coffee and liqueurs had been served and the ladies of the party had retired. He turned to me and asked if I would smoke a cigar with him in his study. So for a quarter of an hour we were alone.

I asked him frankly how he came by my name and the nature of my business, and whether Dimitri Stankevitch was his informant.

"That, my friend, you will never know," he answered; "nor need you trouble yourself about it. Your secret will die with the men to whom it is entrusted. Perhaps it would interest you to know that three days before your arrival in Yaroslaff I

knew all about you, and that you would come to see me here."

"I felt relieved by the assurance which he had given me, though, in truth, I was no wiser than before. For some minutes we smoked on in silence. Then he laid down his cigar, and, looking at me with a kindly smile went on with the conversation.

"It is no crime for a man to wish to see his friend who is a convict. He has a perfect right to see him; and he may even obtain a permit to speak with him—unless his friend happen to be immured in the fortress of Schlusselburg.* That is all that I know about you—you wish to visit your friend who is a convict. You are committing no crime, and I am satisfied. It is the business of the authorities to see that the prisoners are safe in their keeping; it is nothing to me if they escape—and it is only human nature if they try to do so. And it is for the reason that you are doing no wrong in attempting to find and speak with your friend that I counselled you to drop your false name and passport. By assuming Russian nationality you are placing yourself in a false position and violating the laws of the country; and I cannot see that you are thereby benefiting your friend. I hope you will recognise the advisability of reverting to your own name and nationality as soon as possible."

I assured him that I would take his advice on this point, and once more become Carl Joubert, an

* The fortress of Schlusselburg is a living grave; no communications of any kind are allowed with the prisoners, who are in solitary confinement in its cells until death.

English doctor, travelling in Russia for pathological research.

The old gentleman was evidently pleased at my decision, and repeated that by so doing I should be acting in the best interest of my friend and of myself.

"I will give you one last word of advice before we join the ladies," he said, rising from his chair and throwing away the end of his cigar. "Whatever your friend in Lithuania tells you to do—do it. Keep him always informed of your next move, and his letters will be addressed to you 'Poste Restante.'"

Then we left his study and rejoined the ladies in the drawing-room, and it was late in the evening before I returned to my hotel.

In reflecting on the events of the past week one fact became very clear to me, namely, that the direction of the "Kolka relief expedition" had passed out of my hands and had been assumed by Dimitri Stankevitch. I was to do whatever he told me. I confess that at first I resented the supersession of my command. I had my own ideas and my own plans, and it was mortifying to forego them. But, on second thoughts, I saw the wisdom of resigning the chief command to Dimitri. He was a man of influence in Russia; his letters of introduction had proved of the utmost value; he had means of ascertaining facts which neither Dr. Denmanovitch, of Lithuania, nor Carl Joubert, of England, could possibly find out; and, lastly, he was Dimitri Stankevitch, my friend, and the man who had

promised to risk everything for me if trouble befell. Therefore I resigned myself to the position of Dimitri's agent in the affair, and was content to work under his guidance, so long as the object in view were attained.

I had not long to wait for my orders. On the day after my dinner with the family of the mysterious old gentleman I received a telegram from the *Ispravnik*.

"Glad you have taken my advice. Go to Tomsk."

CHAPTER VI

THE POLKOVNIK

I DO not propose to weary my readers with a detailed account of my journey from Yaroslaff to Tomsk. I will only mention the fact that I was nearly a month on the road, travelling sometimes by railway and sometimes in a *droshka*. Twice the train in which I travelled came to grief; but finally I arrived safely with my precious belt at the capital of Tomsk.

It was midsummer when I reached my destination, and it was insufferably hot. The mosquitoes and flies were maddening in their attentions, I remember, and those who have lived in tropical climates will understand and pardon me for descending to particulars so minute as mosquitoes.

There are certain things in life which impress themselves indelibly on the memory: the mosquito is one of them. On the other hand, dates are not. For obvious reasons I kept no diary of my peregrinations in Russia. I have endeavoured to recall events as they happened; but after a lapse of years only the cardinal points stand out clear in my memory; the blank days are forgotten.

Hitherto the blanks have been few, and nearly every day from the date of my departure from San Francisco to the last interview with the kindly

old official at Yaroslaff was eventful. But on my arrival at Tomsk the march of events was necessarily slower. One reason for this was that I had no letter of introduction to any official in Tomsk.

I went, on my arrival, to the post office, and handing my passport (it was my English passport made out in my own name) to the clerk, I inquired if there were any letters for me. The Tartar clerk took down a bundle of letters from a shelf and looked through them lazily: "No," he said, "there are no letters for you."

I admit that I felt relieved, for, so long as I was left without instructions from Dimitri, I was free to follow my own devices. One of my first actions was directly opposed to the advice of the old gentleman in Yaroslaff, who had counselled me on no account to try to intercept Kolka before his arrival in Irkutsk.

It was the sight of the prisoners' barracks, with the sentries parading up and down outside the gates, that impelled me to try and gain admission. At the barred windows I could see faces peering out—faces of all descriptions; but all sad. There were young girls' faces among them with dishevelled hair and hollow cheeks. They paused for a moment behind the iron bars to inhale a breath of fresh air, and then gave place to another. So, like a procession of damned souls in hell, the faces passed silently by the grated windows and disappeared.

A Tartar carrying a basket of fish passed me in the street as I stood gazing up at the windows of the barracks. I stopped him.

"What place is that?" I asked pointing to the grim building.

He answered curtly that it was the halting-place for prisoners on the road to the far East of Siberia, and walked on.

The thought that Kolka might be amongst them maddened me. At whatever cost I must gain admission and find out whether he is there, or whether I must go further East seeking him. If he were behind those bars, how could I let him go further without making an attempt to free him?

But it was useless for me to stand gazing at the haunting procession of faces at the window; permits are not obtained in that way—even if they are obtained at all. As I was reasoning thus with myself, my right hand rested on the belt round my waist, and I was convinced that the necessary permit could be obtained.

I returned to my hotel and asked for the proprietor. He was a typical Tartar with a dark and smiling visage, and with all the cunning and greed of his race.

"I want you to assist me," I said.

The proprietor at once assumed an air of self-importance.

"I am ready to serve your Excellency in any way that you command."

"I am a stranger in these parts," I continued, "and I am anxious to see all your institutions and public buildings. I should especially like, as a doctor, to inspect your hospitals and prisons."

At the mere mention of the prisons, mine host sniffed disdainfully.

"Pfui! pfui!" he exclaimed. "If you go there, you will regret it—they are not pleasant places. But if you really have such an unsavoury desire, I can easily arrange the matter for you. The officers of the prison staff come here every evening to eat and drink. If you will come to their room this evening I will be there, and I will introduce you to the *Polkovnik*, who is in command. For one bottle he will do anything you wish."

I thanked him, and promised to come to the officers' room that evening.

Then I went out to take stock of the town. It is a great straggling place and shelters a population of many races. The Russian officials and their families have houses on the higher portion of the town. Tartars and some Chinese inhabit the suburbs. There are some substantial buildings, and the towering spires of mosques give an imposing appearance to the place. But the poorer quarters are composed of streets of wretched, wooden hovels.

I attracted but little notice in the town, for I wore a Russian Rubashka, and belt and long boots. My costume and the black beard and drooping moustaches which covered my face gave me the appearance of a Tartar. But if I looked "at home" in Tomsk, I was feeling very lonely; and the thought that Kolka might also be in Tomsk made me the more determined to find him if I could.

When I entered the officers' room in the hotel that evening there were about a dozen officers

present. Some were eating, some were enjoying ices, and a good number were playing cards, with little piles of roubles in front of them.

The proprietor came up to me smiling and bowing, and asked if I would not take something to drink. I ordered a bottle of *Kievskoi Nalivka*, a mild liqueur of a dark reddish colour which is contained in bottles coated with fine gravel. He served me with a bottle, and standing by the table at which I sat, he pointed out the *Polkovnik* playing cards at a neighbouring table.

"I will ask him to leave his play and allow me to introduce you to him," he said, and went across to the table where the *Polkovnik* sat.

But the *Polkovnik* was a loser, and declined to be disturbed until he had had his revenge, and so the proprietor conducted me to the table and introduced me to the *Polkovnik*, placing a chair behind him for me. The game was "Ocko," and it was obvious from the single coin in front of him, and the large heap that had accumulated on the opposite side of the table, that the *Polkovnik* was having a bad time of it.

However he shook hands good-naturedly and bade me sit down.

"I have lost a lot of money to-night," he said quietly.

I asked if I might be allowed to go into partnership with him, and said I should be very glad to put up the money if he was agreeable.

My suggestion met with general approval; for it was evident that the *Polkovnik* could not continue

playing much longer with a solitary five-rouble piece, and I daresay the idea of relieving a stranger of some of his superfluous cash was not without its charms for the rest of the players.

I pulled out a hundred rouble note and handed it to the *Polkovnik*, though there were not more than sixty roubles on the table. The effect on the players was instantaneous, their eyes brightened greedily, and they promptly doubled the stakes.

But my hundred rouble note gave the *Polkovnik* fresh courage, and brought a change of luck. We were winning money hand over fist, and before an hour was over the *Polkovnik* had won back all that he had lost and a good deal more.

When the game broke up, at about one o'clock, the *Polkovnik* handed me back my hundred rouble note and sixty-five more as my share of the winnings. I pocketed the money and invited him to have some supper with me.

We sat down at a table away from the others, and supper was brought for us.

"I want you to do me a favour," I said quietly.

"What is it?" the *Polkovnik* asked.

"I wish you would take this back," I answered, pushing the sixty-five roubles across the table to him.

The *Polkovnik* demurred. He declared that I was entitled to the money and should keep it. The notes lay on the table between us, and I could see in his greedy Calmuck eyes that he was afraid that I should put them back into my pocket. So he accepted them with a show of reluctance, and

with the stipulation that he should pay for our supper.

Then we talked of many things, and he questioned me on my travels, and asked for what part of the world I was bound.

I told him that at present I was on my way to the Government of Irkutsk, and that I contemplated returning home by China for the study of Asiatic diseases.

"Then you are a doctor?" he said.

"Yes," I answered. "I have made quite a reputation by the graveyards I have filled."

The *Polkovnik* was amused at my pleasantry; at least, he laughed uproariously till the windows rattled, and even the yellow cat who was slumbering peacefully in the corner got up and stretched herself reproachfully.

"And how long are you staying in Tomsk?" he asked.

"That depends on whether I find anything to interest me here."

"I suppose you have seen Russian churches?"

"Yes—hundreds of them."

"And prisons?"

"A few. I had a permit from the Governor of Moscow to visit the central prison there, and to inspect the prisoners."

"I know the Governor," said the *Polkovnik*. "He is a dear old man. I served under him a long time ago."

"He was very kind to me," I said. "I was much interested in examining the prisoners."

"Oh, then I hope you will come and inspect our prison barracks here, if it interests you. I should like to hear what you think of the health of the prisoners. I am always receiving complaints from them that they cannot walk or that they have consumption. Some of our doctors say that they are malingering, and others that they are really ill. I don't know what to make of it. We lose a good many men and women certainly before they arrive at their destinations. When I see the casualty reports it seems almost like murder."

He paused, as though this were a subject that he either dared not or disliked to pursue further. Then he broke out again suddenly.

"Of course, I have to do my duty. But I am more than sure that the prisoners are not fed sufficiently to keep them alive. I have forwarded reports on the subject to St. Petersburg. But that is all I can do—and nothing more is ever done. Before the *Boje Materi* it is little short of murder! You are a disinterested party, and I should like to hear what you think of it, when you have seen the prisoners for yourself."

I assured him that I should be very happy to fall in with his suggestion, and expressed a hope that my services might be of some use to humanity and contribute to his peace of mind.

"If you will call at the barracks at any hour that is convenient to you, and ask to see me, I shall be glad to show you over the place," said the *Polkovnik*, handing me his card.

I thanked him and bade him good-night.

CHAPTER VII

DR. ANATOVITCH

I BREAKFASTED early the next morning, and having ascertained that my medical chest and instruments were in order, I sat down for a few minutes' thought before starting for the barracks.

It was quite probable that I should find Kolka among the prisoners—and what was to be done if he were there? It was impossible to come to any conclusion on the subject. But there was a dread in my mind that Kolka might recognise me, and by some word or gesture give evidence of the fact, and in one unguarded moment wreck the whole scheme for his rescue. It was true that he had never seen me wearing a Russian Rubashka and with a beard; but still he might recognise me by my eyes, and I determined to leave nothing to chance.

So taking my case of instruments in my hand I went out into the business quarter of the town. It was a long time before I discovered what I wanted, but at last I found a shop where they kept coloured glasses. With a pair of dark blue spectacles on my nose I was convinced that nobody could recognise me unless they heard my voice, and I was determined that if Kolka were among the prisoners he should not hear me speak.

Thus equipped, I took my way through the streets of Tomsk, until I stood before the gates of the barracks where the sentry on guard marched up and down before the inhospitable entrance. I passed in unchallenged by him—I daresay that he thought me beneath his notice—and arrived at the main door of the barracks.

I presented my card to the soldier who opened the door, and requested to see the *Polkovnik*. He bade me follow him, and conducted me across an open courtyard, where several squads of soldiers were being drilled, and finally brought me to a corridor, and handed me over to another soldier, with the remark that his mission ended here, and I could give him whatever I thought fit. I handed him twenty *kopeks*, and he saluted, addressed me as "Excellency" and left me in charge of the other soldier.

In a few minutes I was face to face with my friend the *Polkovnik*. He was surprised to see me in blue goggles; but I explained that the strong sunlight tried my eyes, and I was sometimes obliged to wear them.

"You have come just at the right time," he said, "our regimental doctor is here and will like to go round with you."

He called the doctor to him, and introduced us.

"This is Dr. Mahomed Anatovitch."

The man whom the *Polkovnik* presented was a young fellow of about thirty, good looking and smart in his white linen double-breasted uniform and sword. He made a favourable impression upon

me at once, but the peculiarity of his Christian name puzzled me. Why Mahomed? I asked myself. However, there was no time for speculations on the creed or patronymics of the young doctor. He produced his cigarette case and handed it to me and to the *Polkovnik;* then we all sat down and entered into conversation.

The *Polkovnik* was full of his good fortune of the night before, and recounted for the doctor's benefit the story of our partnership in the game of "Ocko," and how he had won three weeks' pay—after losing all he possessed. It did not appear to trouble him that somebody else had lost three weeks' pay—that was no affair of his; his juniors must look after themselves.

Dr. Anatovitch congratulated the *Polkovnik* on his success, though he did not appear to be deeply interested in the story. But he brightened up when the *Polkovnik* began to speak of our subsequent conversation on the subject of the casualty reports of the Siberian prisoners.

"Dr. Joubert is travelling with hundred rouble notes in the research of science," he explained to Anatovitch, "so I invited him to come and inspect our prisoners' barracks here. It will be interesting to hear what he thinks of our arrangements."

"I fear he will not find them up to the standard of his own country," Anatovitch replied. "I had the advantage of attending at a London hospital for four months six years ago. I wish I could have put in four years there."

Then he began to question me about the physicians

and surgeons whom he had met in the hospital in London. It was evident that he looked upon his visit to England as the event of his life. He was enthusiastic about our hospitals and institutions. And the more Dr. Anatovitch talked the better I liked him.

Presently the conversation came back to the health of the prisoners.

"We have not received much encouragement from St. Petersburg for the petition which we sent in seven months ago," said Anatovitch to the *Polkovnik*. "The answer has come back, that if we are not competent to take proper care of the prisoners there will have to be a change made."

The *Polkovnik* laughed aloud; but Anatovitch did not regard the matter from a humorous point of view. There was a look of rebellion in his eyes as he continued:

"For my part I should welcome the change. The present state of things is intolerable. Dr. Sutayeff, my *galova* (head physician), says we are wasting our sympathy on the prisoners, and that we take their word for everything. I would rather give up my profession at once than act on my superior officer's advice in this matter. But so long as I remain a doctor I shall make my reports in accordance with my professional knowledge and conscience, and in spite of my superiors, even if I am sent to *voilnoie poselenia* for it, as was the case with Alexander Bogdanovitch."

My heart stood still at the mention of Kolka's name. It came so suddenly and unexpectedly that

I was taken completely aback. In his outburst of righteous indignation Dr. Anatovitch had blurted out the one name that I was most anxious to hear spoken. What did he know of Alexander Bogdanovitch? I could hardly restrain myself from asking the question. But there was no need to ask it; for after a pause Anatovitch turned to me and said:

"This Dr. Bogdanovitch was here as a 'political' a short time ago. He is a great man in the science of surgery and medicine. You have probably heard of his father, old Dr. Bogdanovitch, a great doctor in Vyatka; he was excommunicated, and the sins of the father were visited on the unfortunate son. Whilst he was here I gave him thirty-eight prisoners to examine and to diagnose their cases. His diagnosis agreed with my own in thirty-four cases out of the thirty-eight; and, I can tell you, I was very proud of myself, for Bogdanovitch is by far my superior in medical science. He had his education at Bonn, and was a post-graduate of Heidelberg, and he was for a long time in London and Edinburgh University."

He paused, and I was desperately afraid that the conversation might take a different turn, and the subject of Alexander Bogdanovitch be dropped before I could find out all I wanted to know. I dared not show interest in the son; but I could speak of the father without arousing suspicion.

"Yes," I said, "I have heard of old Dr. Bogdanovitch of Vyatka. I have read his name in some medical journal, I think it was the *Lancet* of London."

Dr. Anatovitch did not pursue the subject; and

again I felt that if I let this opportunity slip of finding out where Kolka had been sent, I might not have another chance of questioning Anatovitch on the subject. The moment was tense with anxiety. I must risk the question.

"And what has become of young Dr. Bogdanovitch?" I asked with as much unconcern as I could muster.

"He left here ten days ago for Krasnoiarsk," Anatovitch answered. "To what place is he consigned?" he asked, addressing the question to the *Polkovnik.*

The *Polkovnik* went over to a shelf at the far end of the room and took down a large volume and began to search the index.

"Bogdanovitch is consigned to Balogansk in the Government of Irkutsk," he said at last, closing the book and returning it to the shelf.

"Poor boy!" said Anatovitch with a sigh. "It was on my recommendation that he went to Krasnoiarsk, I thought they could find some professional work for him there."

"Balogansk," "Balogansk," the word was ringing in my ears. "How long will it be before he reaches Balogansk?" I asked the question of the *Polkovnik.*

"How long?" he reiterated. "I expect the *partia* will be five or six months on the road. What with the invalids and women, and their chains, the convicts are not fast travellers."

"Bogdanovitch will at least be without chains," said the doctor, "nor will he have his head shaved.

have arranged for that with the officer in charge. He will be treated like a gentleman."

"What was his offence?" I asked innocently.

"Oh, well!" said the *Polkovnik*, "we won't talk about that."

Anatovitch glanced at himself in the glass, and twisted up the ends of his moustache. An orderly entered the room with papers for the *Polkovnik* to sign; and whilst the *Polkovnik* sat down at the table to append his signature, the doctor turned to me.

"His offence—eh?" he said quietly. "His offence may be mine to-morrow."

I liked Anatovitch from the first; and this simple confession increased my respect for the man.

When the *Polkovnik* had despatched his business, I asked them both to return and dine with me at the hotel. I could see by their faces that they were pleased by my invitation, and they accepted it readily. So we left the barracks and returned to the hotel together. I dispensed with my blue spectacles, finding that my eyes no longer troubled me. I knew now that there would be no need for me to wear them when I visited the prisoners in the barracks, for I should not find Kolka amongst them.

The proprietor of the hotel greeted us with a smiling countenance. Guests were always welcome, especially when expensive dinners and champagne were ordered for their consumption. There was some misunderstanding over the champagne. When it arrived, I noticed at once that the bottle bore no

resemblance to the ordinary champagne bottle of France. I called the proprietor and questioned him about it.

"This is the finest Russian champagne, your High-born," he explained, turning the bottle in his hands and displaying the label. "It costs one rouble and seventy-five kopeks a bottle. But, of course, if you wish for imported wine you shall have it; but the price is very high—as much as fourteen roubles a bottle."

"Never mind," I answered; "let us have two bottles of French champagne."

I think the proprietor put me down as a madman. Not once in six months did he receive a demand for imported champagne, and an order for two bottles at once was unprecedented. As for the *Polkovnik*, I could see his greedy little eyes twinkling in anticipation of the feast. A man who flourished hundred rouble notes and ordered French champagne was worthy of encouragement and friendship, and he frankly extended both to me before the meal was over. The third bottle, ordered at the end of the feast, sealed the bond of eternal amity between us. We rose from the table on terms of brotherhood.

CHAPTER VIII

PRISONERS

THE *Polkovnik* was perfectly satisfied with the arrangement. Dr. Anatovitch was to conduct me round the prisoners' barracks and show me everything I wished to see, and give me liberty to examine any prisoners whom I wished to examine. It was a *carte blanche* order to inspect the interior of a Siberian prison.

The cells were without furniture, and were fitted with sloping plank beds across the whole breadth of the compartment. There was no straw or covering of any kind for the wretched prisoners, who sat huddled together on the bare benches which formed their seat by day and their resting-place at night. In the women's cells the state of things was just the same—no consideration was extended to their gentler sex. They were prisoners—that was all; and a Russian prisoner has no sex.

On one bench I saw as many as fourteen prisoners sitting or lying together with their heavy chains upon their legs. At every movement the chains clank and rattle upon the boards; and as they can never keep still for a moment, but must of necessity scratch their tormented limbs, the clatter of the

chains is ceaseless, and proclaims the measure of their wretchedness.

Their food is repulsive. They are given a piece of bread and a bowl of soup. I inspected the rations in the prison at Tomsk. The soup stank with the odour of a soap factory. I asked for a piece of the bread from a warder, and when I had examined it I called for a bowl of warm water. I put the bread to soak in the water, and in a couple of minutes I handed the wooden bowl to Dr. Anatovitch, and asked him to look at it.

"Why should I examine it?" he asked. But a moment later I heard him exclaim: "My God! My God!"

The surface of the water was covered with worms.

He gave his permission to have the bowl sealed and sent to my hotel for analysis; and confessed to me that he had never discovered the state of the bread before.

I am aware that in no part of the world is the lot of the prisoner a happy one. It is not intended that it should be; but in civilised countries they are, at least, given the opportunity of keeping themselves clean and decent. They are treated as human beings, and their health is considered; but in Russia it is different. The prisoners in Russia, whether before or after the trial—and a great many of the political prisoners have no trial — the Russian prisoners are considered beasts, and treated accordingly. The warders know what is expected of them; and if a warder shows any glimmering of humanity in his treatment of the prisoners committed to his

charge, his services are dispensed with and a stronger-hearted warder takes his place.

I said that Russian prisoners have no sex; but I must qualify that statement. In so far as the normal treatment of the women is concerned, they are separated from the men, but no other distinction is made. If they are young and attractive, however, their sex can procure for them, and worse still, for those who are dear to them, a certain amount of consideration from those in authority over them on the road to Siberia.

Dr. Anatovitch raised no objections to my examination of some of the prisoners who had reported themselves as unfit to travel, and who had therefore been accused of malingering. He lent me his office for the purpose of my inspection, and very considerately allowed me to be alone with each case.

I begged that the fetters might be removed from the prisoners before they were sent in to me, and asked that I might see the "politicals" first. One by one they were admitted to the office, where I examined and questioned them.

I am able to give some of the cases which came under my notice.

(1) A young man, aged twenty, a student from Kasan, stated that he has committed no crime; but was found reading a certain book in which the censor's name did not figure on the title-page, was arrested by the secret police, and sent for five years hard labour in the Government of Irkutsk. I examined him and found him in the second stage of consumption. His troubles would soon be over.

(2) A man, aged thirty-four, a compositor by trade —this is a suspicious trade in Russia—stated that he was taken from his home in Odessa, two years ago, and sent to penal servitude for life in the Government of the Amurs without trial. On examination I found that he was infected with sarcoma. Nothing had been done for him, and he slept and ate with the other prisoners.

(3) A lad, aged eighteen, a student in Moihilev, stated that he was arrested for being in company with a man who had certain pamphlets against the Greek Church in his possession. He was but very slightly acquainted with the man. Sentenced to three years *voilnoie poselenia* in the Government of Yenisei. Health, internal aneurism. An immediate operation was necessary; but there was no one capable of performing the operation.

(4) Man, aged twenty-five, medical student from Kieff. Sentenced to fifteen years in the Government of the Amurs for being implicated in a students' riot. Health, first stage of consumption.

I examined many other cases that day amongst the male prisoners, and found a very large proportion of them suffering from diseases for which they had received no treatment of any kind.

On the following day I was allowed to make an examination of some of the women.

(1) A girl, aged nineteen, from Taganrog, stated that she was found in the house of a Nihilist. The Nihilist got away before arrest, but she was taken, though absolutely innocent, as a substitute. No trial. Twenty years *voilnoie poselenia* in the

Government of Irkutsk. Examined her and found that she was suffering from cancer of the breast. Nothing had been done for her.

(2) A woman, aged twenty-seven, from the city of Moscow, wife of a lawyer. Her husband, in the same prison, was sentenced to ten years *voilnoie poselenia* for being in the possession of certain books. Health, advanced pregnancy.

(3) Woman, aged twenty-two, stated that she was found in the company of advanced thinkers. Sentenced to ten years in the Government of Irkutsk. I found that she was suffering from tetanus. Nothing had been done for her. I advised that she should be treated hypodermically with anti-tetanus serum, morphine with atropine, &c.

(4) Woman, aged thirty-one, was arrested in Odessa with her husband, who had made a "revolutionary" speech. Sentenced to twenty years *voilnoie poselenia* in the Government of Yenesei. On examination I found that she had lupus in an advanced stage. She needed good, healthy air, and to be treated with Röntgen rays, poor soul!

Such were a few of the cases that came under my notice. I have no reason to think that there was anything exceptional in the gang of prisoners to which they belonged. It was just the normal treatment of all prisoners consigned to Siberia, and it is not therefore surprising that a large number of them never reach their destinations.

In the year 1898 a *partia* of 310 prisoners left the Moscow prison for Siberia. Only seventy-two arrived at their destination. Some were murdered by

their guards, some by infectious diseases, some by starvation, and some because they wanted to be murdered.

And who is responsible for this appalling state of affairs?

Can you blame the doctors, ignorant as most of them are? Their ignorance is fostered by the Government, and their reports of the facts are used as a weapon against them.

Can you blame the military escorts and the staff of the prisons and halting-places on the route, brutal and callous as they generally are? Their conduct towards the prisoners is but the outcome of their training, and it is not called in question by their superiors.

The fireside philanthropist, who is charitably disposed to all men, says that it is the fault of the system, and nobody is to blame. But the system is the Government, and the Government is the Tsar, and the Tsar is the "Zembla Bogh." Here, as elsewhere, the chain of responsibility is complete, and it is easy to lay the blame on the right man.

CHAPTER IX

A MESSAGE FROM KOLKA

AFTER the inspection and examination of the wards and prisoners I returned with Dr. Anatovitch to the hotel. I invited him to my room to discuss our two days' work, and he appeared glad of the opportunity of talking frankly on a subject which interested him so deeply.

He was very sad about the state of the prisoners.

"You see how helpless I am!" he exclaimed. "I can do nothing! It will continue to be hopeless so long as——"

He checked himself. Even to me he dared not say what was in his mind. But I knew Dr. Anatovitch well enough by this time to fear nothing from him as regards my mission.

My heart was already directed towards Krasnoiarsk. Yet I could not leave Tomsk before I received instructions from Dimitri Stankevitch. I felt as helpless as Anatovitch; like him, I knew what it was in my heart to do, and yet I could not do it without breaking faith with Dimitri. I was inwardly raging at my impotence; and whilst my thoughts were travelling to Krasnoiarsk and thence to Balogansk, Dr. Anatovitch was helping himself to tea from the *samovar* and lighting a cigarette.

"You English enjoy life," he said, dropping a slice of lemon into his glass. "You travel wherever it pleases you, and, when you are tired of travelling, you marry and settle down to domestic bliss."

"Possibly," I answered, with discretion. "And what do you Russians do?"

"You know what our existence is well enough," he said bitterly. "In the last two days you have seen how we travel, with chains and disease, and we are permitted to settle down to domestic bliss—in the Government of Irkutsk."

What I answered I cannot remember; but a little later he said that he seemed to have known me for years, and asked if he might tell me his story. I encouraged him to unburden himself, not out of curiosity or civility but because I liked and sympathised with him.

"My mother was a Mohammedan," he began, and thus his strange "Christian" name was explained. "She was a 'lady-in-waiting' to a certain Kniaz in Moscow. I am the illegitimate son of the Kniaz. My mother died when I was quite young. I had a beggarly sort of education and my father neglected me. However, he sent me to Moscow to study medicine, and I worked night and day to save up a little money to enable me to go to London for a course in one of the hospitals there before I entered the Service.

"After I returned I became an army doctor; but my father would still do nothing for me. He could have procured my promotion if he had liked; but he considered that he had done his duty by giving me

a start in life, and he washed his hands of me. I was not going to ask any favours of him, and so it comes about that I have a hard struggle for life on less than a hundred roubles a month, and everything to find for myself. I have nothing to which to look forward, and if I do my duty conscientiously I am reprimanded by my superior officers. Can you wonder that I am not a happy man? Do you blame me for envying you English, with your education and liberty? Do you realise that in this country we are not allowed even to express an opinion, and that I would not dare to say to any of my own countrymen what I am saying to you now? It is the same with all of us: we have senses and reasoning powers, and, therefore, we must feel and think; but, if we gave expression to our thoughts, how many, even of the highest officials, would retain their posts? How many would go where my friend Alexander Bogdanovitch is going?"

The mention of that name again set my pulses beating faster. Why had Dr. Anatovitch referred to him again? And why did he speak of Kolka as "my friend?"

"You have mentioned Bogdanovitch's name to me twice," I said. "Is he, then, a friend of yours?"

"Yes," he answered. "I know him and his family very well. I regard Alexander as one of my best friends."

"Then why did you not effect his rescue?" I asked.

Anatovitch leaned over the table towards me with

an eager expression in his eyes, and sank his voice almost to a whisper.

"I tried to persuade him to escape," he said hoarsely; "I made every avenue clear for him, and I offered him all the money I have in the world—it only amounts to 310 roubles—but he would not listen to me. He was afraid that I should get into trouble. I could do no more than I have done."

And then I did a thing which I fear will meet with the disapproval of my readers. I rose and went across to him, and, laying my hands on his shoulders, kissed him.

We are an unemotional race, and such exhibitions of weakness shock our sense of decorum. I will only urge in my defence that Tomsk is not Piccadilly, and that the studied reserve of Belgravia is not *de rigueur* in Siberia.

It was some moments before I could trust myself to speak; but at last I found my voice again.

"I have travelled 11,000 miles to release Alexander Bogdanovitch," I said.

"You!" Anatovitch exclaimed incredulously.

"He is more than a brother to me, and his father treats me as his son," I explained.

Anatovitch unbuttoned his tunic, and from an inside pocket produced a letter-case.

"Bogdanovitch gave me this," he said, drawing a *carte-de-visite* photograph from the case, "and told me that it was a friend of his who would come for him. If he came through Tomsk, and I recognised him, I was to tell him to comfort his father and sisters, and to warn him not to be reckless on his

account; but that he would follow him when he came."

He handed the photograph to me with a puzzled look. It was a picture of myself taken many years before without a beard, and in English clothes—quite unrecognisable.

"It is a photograph of me," I said, "though you might not think so."

I was glad that Kolka expected me; and this extraordinary message from him gave me renewed hope, and seemed to bring him closer. But I could see that Anatovitch was sceptical, and I wanted to convince him, for, apart from the fact that I liked the man, I saw in him a valuable and willing ally.

And so I told him the whole story from the beginning, up to the time when I appeared at the prison in blue spectacles, to avoid startling Kolka, and discarded them when I discovered that he was not there. As a further argument that I was not an impostor, I lifted up my *rubashka* and unfastened the belt which I wore beneath it. From one of the pockets in it I produced a passport and a *chorosho povedenia* made out to suit Kolka's figure and face, even to the scar which I had placed there in a duel at Heidelberg University many years before.

Dr. Anatovitch was convinced, even to the extent of tracing a likeness in the photograph.

"How do you intend to rescue him?" he asked.

"Look in the belt and you will see," I answered.

At the sight of so much money Anatovitch became visibly excited.

"*Boje moi!*" he exclaimed. "If the proprietor

of the hotel knew of this you would be murdered in daylight."

He went to the door and looked outside, to make sure that nobody was listening. Then he closed it again carefully and came back to his chair. I buckled on the belt beneath my *rubashka,* and for some minutes neither of us spoke. Anatovitch was evidently deep in thought.

"Destiny is in it," he exclaimed at length. "I shall stand in with you my English friend, and take the chances."

"Since we understand each other, and have the same purpose in view," I said, "tell me what we should do. I have friends helping me in the matter, as I have told you; but they are thousands of miles from the base of operations, and we are on the spot, and the time has come to act on our own initiative."

"Just at present," Anatovitch answered, "I am not thinking of Alexander Bogdanovitch, but of you. With all that money about you your life is in danger here. You do not realise that there are men in this country who will be murderers for fifty *kopeks;* and I am frankly anxious for the life of a man who orders three bottles of imported champagne at a sitting. You must do what I advise in this matter, my friend, or there will be an untimely end to all our schemes."

I told him that he need not trouble himself about my safety, but find out some means to rescue Kolka.

"We have been together quite long enough," he

answered. "We must go downstairs and see what the *Polkovnik* is doing at the card-table. I will think it over."

And so we quitted my room and went to the restaurant. The *Polkovnik* was absorbed in his play, and I noticed that he was a winner. We showed ourselves for a few minutes in the room, and then went out into the streets of Tomsk together, and I walked with Anatovitch to his house.

"I am going to lend you one of my *dentchiks*," he said, when we arrived at his quarters. "He will mount guard over you and your roubles. I have two of them, and I can quite well spare one for you. You will greatly relieve my mind by accepting his services. He is a trustworthy man from my own country, and he has my orders to do whatever he is told."

So that night, whilst I slept, the *dentchik* paraded the passage outside my door, or sat by the closed portal. I daresay Anatovitch was perfectly right, and that the possession of so large a sum of money constituted a personal danger; but I cannot pretend that the presence of the *dentchik* made any appreciable difference to my peace of mind; and the thought that the unfortunate man was doing sentry-go outside my room all night made me quite uncomfortable.

In the morning he brought me my *samovar* and *sacharais*, and I dressed myself and went to the post office to inquire if there were any letters for me. The clerk knew me, and it was not necessary to produce my passport again; but there was no

letter. And so I returned to the hotel, wondering that Dimitri Stankevitch had sent no word since my arrival in Tomsk.

At the hotel I found the *dentchik* cleaning my boots with vigour, and seeming to enjoy the work. There was something thorough and cheerful about the man which was pleasing. I stopped to speak to him, and asked his name.

"I am called Petrus, your Excellency," he replied, standing to "attention" with a boot in either hand.

"Very well, Petrus," I said, "you are to stay here with me for the present, and I will give orders to the servants to look after you well."

His face expressed satisfaction with the arrangement, and I have reason to believe that Petrus fared sumptuously during his stay in the hotel in Tomsk.

I was expecting Anatovitch to come and see me, and therefore I did not go out again. But the morning wore on and he did not put in an appearance. At last I fell asleep in my chair, and it was past four o'clock when I awoke to a loud knocking at the door.

Petrus entered in answer to my summons. He reported that a very tall man of rough appearance had come to see me. He had refused to state his business or to say who he was. The *dentchik* evidently regarded him as a suspicious personage, and had warned him with threats not to approach my door.

I could not imagine who the stranger could be; but I told Petrus to admit him, and to wait for further orders.

CHAPTER X

IVAN

He was a very tall man, with long muscular limbs and an inscrutable face, which seemed vaguely familiar to me. He was travel-stained and unkempt, but he held himself straight as an arrow, and saluted with military precision when he entered the room. From a leather wallet, slung with a strap across his shoulder beneath his coat, he produced a large envelope, and handed it to me in silence. The moment I caught sight of the seals on the envelope I knew from whom he had come, and I told Petrus to take him to the restaurant and see that he was given food and drink.

They both saluted and left the room. As they retired I could hear Petrus explaining, that if he had known that the stranger was acquainted with his Excellency he would not have made any trouble about admitting him. But the saturnine stranger did not trouble to answer, nor to meet the friendly overtures of Petrus in a like spirit. He was morosely silent.

I closed the door behind them and broke the seals of the letter. It was from Dimitri Stankevitch, and the purport of it was this:

Greetings from his family circle. This communi-

cation would be handed to me by his most trusted servant, Ivan, whom I must have seen about his home in Lithuania—probably with the children, to whom he was a devoted and constant companion. Ivan could be as tender as a child, but when there was work to be done there was no man more competent to do it—especially if it were work of a dangerous nature. He had, therefore, instructed Ivan to stay with me for so long as I remained in the country, and to watch over and serve me to the best of his ability. He went on to caution me as to the dangerous character of the people amongst whom I was now living, describing them as "cut-throats and thieves." And he hoped that Ivan would prove a protection to me. And then followed a sentence which gave me much relief of mind. It was to the effect that I need not further consult him as to my plans for attaining my object; and that I must follow my own inclinations in future in the matter. In conclusion he invoked the blessing of Heaven on my enterprise—and there was no signature.

The letter of Dimitri Stankevitch cheered me not a little. When a man is thousands of miles from his friends, and in a land alone, there is a deal of comfort in a letter from one of his old associates. It brings a breath of familiarity into the arid atmosphere of loneliness which surrounds him, and recalls vividly to his mind the environment of other days.

I read the letter over and over again; and then I went out in search of Anatovitch, who had not come to see me as I had expected. At his house the *dentchik* informed me that he had gone out on

horseback at an early hour in the morning, and had not yet returned. I asked the man whether there was anything unusual in this; but he declined to express an opinion, and his attitude gave me to understand that the habits of Dr. Anatovitch were no business of mine.

I went to the barracks and called on the *Polkovnik*, in the hope of hearing from him of the whereabouts of the doctor. But the *Polkovnik* was not at the barracks. I was leaving the building when I met one of the officers in the corridor. I asked if he had lately seen Dr. Anatovitch. He had met him, he said, on horseback on the great Moscow road at about nine o'clock in the morning, and he would probably be back before night, as he had his duties to attend to the next day.

I was not a little disturbed by the news. Why had Anatovitch not told me that he was going away for the day? I had been expecting him to come and see me; but he had gone off on some mysterious errand without a word of explanation.

So I returned to the hotel. The day was stifling hot and there was not a breath of air. I went to my room and ordered ices and sat down to think it over. Perhaps Petrus could throw some light on the matter. I summoned and questioned him.

"Where does the Moscow road lead to, Petrus?"

"To Moscow, your Excellency," he replied promptly—he knew that much, in spite of the absence of the schoolboard in Russia.

"But in the other direction?" I persisted. "Supposing that you followed it from Moscow

and went East through Tomsk, where would you get to?"

"To many places, Bareen—Atchinsk, Marunsk, and Krasnoiarsk."

"Very good," I answered. "Now send the man who came with the letter to me."

Petrus saluted and withdrew, and in a few minutes Ivan presented himself. He looked a very different man from the ungainly and unkempt ruffian who had delivered his letter to me in the afternoon. He wore a clean suit and polished boots, and his hair and beard were well combed and glossy.

"Well, Ivan," I said, "how long is it since you left your master in Lithuania?"

"Six weeks, Bareen," he replied laconically.

"By what route did you come?"

"To the White City, where I remained for two days, in accordance with his High-born's instructions. Then to Yaroslaff. I was four hours in Yaroslaff. I returned to Moscow, and came here by Kasan, Ekaterinaburg, and Omsk."

"You have had a long journey on the way to Eastern Siberia," I said.

"It is nothing," he answered. He spoke as though a journey of over 4000 miles were part of his daily routine, and displayed not the slightest emotion at the separation from his home and people which it entailed.

"Your master has very kindly placed your services at my disposal," I continued. "You will meet with a great deal of hard work and possibly some dangers in my service."

"So his High-born informed me, Bareen."

"And you are prepared to go through with it and take the risks?"

He looked at me with what was almost a pitying smile. It was the first gleam of expression of any sort that I had seen in his face; but he answered in two words:

"Yes, Bareen."

When he had left the room I realised the measure of strength which this taciturn man possessed. His personality, in its cold, unbending rigidity, resembled an iron girder hidden within the walls of a house. His presence suggested strength and stability; and when he took his departure I was conscious of his absence. He was one of those men whom the great of this world use as foundations for the bridge over which they pass to fame. Silent and uncomplaining they stand the stress of the flood waters of revolution, whilst the man who shaped them for his purpose passes in triumph over the structure which they support.

The evening was wearing on and still Anatovitch did not return. I despatched Petrus to his house to make inquiries, but he came back without news of his master.

To pass the time I went for a walk in the streets of Tomsk; but first I delivered my precious belt to Ivan's keeping, telling him to guard it as his own life. He buckled it on beneath his *rubaschka* with absolute unconcern, and saluted respectfully when the adjustment was complete.

As I was returning to the hotel, and was about to

enter, I heard the clatter of a horse's hoofs on the roadway; and on looking back I saw Anatovitch ride up to the entrance, covered with dust and perspiration. He leaned over in the saddle and whispered that he was tired and hungry, and would go to his house to change his clothes, and then come back to the hotel for supper.

I ordered a meal for us both; and in less than an hour Anatovitch returned and flung himself into a chair in my room.

"I have done a good day's work," he said, lighting a cigarette. "Yes, by God, a good day's work!"

"Tell me about it," I said. I knew quite well that his day's work was in connection with our scheme to rescue Alexander Bogdanovitch, and I was desperately anxious to hear his news.

"I have located a certain convoy of prisoners which left this place some time ago for Krasnoiarsk. I rode along the Krasnoiarsk road until I got definite news of them. They are at a halting-place about half-way, and according to my informant, whom I met coming from Krasnoiarsk, they have been at the halting-place for several days."

"How far is it to Krasnoiarsk?" I asked.

"About 500 versts."

"That is about 350 English miles," I mused aloud. "Then according to your information the convoy is some 250 versts from Tomsk?"

"Yes," he answered, "and making very slow progress. I expect this hot weather is breaking the poor creatures down by the score. That is my

news, and I have come straight to you with it, so that we may talk it over."

"I have had some news to-day, too," I said, handing him Dimitri Stankevitch's letter. There was no heading to it and no signature, so I did not compromise Dimitri by showing it to Anatovitch. He read it through several times and then handed it back to me, and I held it in the flame of a candle until it was burnt.

Then supper was served, and we fell to. We were both hungry, and the presence of the servants and our appetites prevented any further discussion until after the meal was over.

I noticed that Anatovitch looked approvingly at Ivan, who was assisting Petrus to wait on us. The man instilled confidence even by the manner in which he handed the dishes. His impassive features never relaxed into a smile or frown. He was perfectly imperturbable in his demeanour and movements.

After the table had been cleared, and the servants had retired, we lighted our cigarettes and came to business once more.

"We must act at once," I said. "That letter which I showed you leaves me unfettered, and there is no one now whom I need consult. My idea is that we should not allow our friend to enter Irkutsk nor Balogansk. The further he goes on the road the greater will be the difficulty of bringing him back. I think I should intercept him before the *rota* arrives at Krasnoiarsk. For if once he enters the strongholds of Krasnoiarsk or Balogansk goodness knows when or how we can get him out."

Anatovitch was in complete agreement with me on this point.

"The *rota* cannot arrive at Krasnoiarsk for at least three weeks," he said, "though the road is shaded for the greater part of the way by forests of trees. It is a magnificent road, from an æsthetic point of view, though a deal of human suffering and sorrow finds a path along it."

He paused for a few minutes, as though he were planning the details of the scheme.

"Of course you will take Ivan and Petrus with you?" he said at last. "I can trust Petrus, though I do not pretend that he is of the same stamp as that fellow Ivan. But he is a reliable man and understands horses. I can get the horses for you here, and Petrus will look after them on the road. When will you start?"

There was nothing to prevent my starting the next day, and I told him so.

"Very well," he said. "I will give you a letter to the officer in command of the convoy. I shall say that you are a doctor travelling for pathological research—the old story; and that you were entertained royally by the regiment here—which is not true, but will serve its turn as an introduction. As to the rest, you must rely upon your belt; there is enough in that to corrupt all the officials in Asiatic Russia."

"And when I have obtained possession of Alexander Bogdanovitch—what then?" I asked.

"You can bring him back here, and I will do the rest; or, at least, I can help you to dispose of him," he answered.

His suggestions seemed feasible. Certainly I was not in a position to improve upon them. But there was one question which I had still to ask him. We were very good friends by this time, and the formal "you" had given place to the familiar "thou" in our intercourse—a distinction which cannot well be adhered to in English.

"If I can get Alexander Bogdanovitch safely out of the country, and myself too, will you come with us?" I asked. "You would be happier out of Russia."

"I can make no promises," Anatovitch replied. "I am not thinking of myself just now. I am thinking of Alexander Bogdanovitch."

I said no more on the subject, and we discussed the details of our plans. I was to take with me clothes for Kolka; and Anatovitch suggested that I should carry all my spare clothes with me. "There may be others," he explained, laconically.

"Then it is quite settled that you start to-morrow?"

I nodded assent, and Anatovitch called in Petrus.

"Petrushka," he said, "you will go now, at once, to Demidoff and tell him to get three of his best horses ready for to-morrow morning at eleven o'clock —and see that they are well rested. If he wants to know for how long they will be required, you can tell him for some weeks—that is all. Mind, two in a *droshka*, and one saddled; to be here at eleven o'clock to-morrow. Come back and report if he can do it."

It was very late when Petrus returned with the

news that the horses and *droshka* would be ready at eleven o'clock in the morning.

"Petrushka," said Anatovitch, "you will drive the *droshka* and look after the horses. And you are to go with the Bareen, and defend him if necessary, and bring him back to me safely."

Petrus grinned good-naturedly, and replied that he would protect me with his life. He was evidently elated at the idea of the journey, though he knew nothing of its destination or duration. It was enough for him that the hum-drum existence of Tomsk was to be exchanged for a pair of horses and the road.

When he had gone, Anatovitch said that he must be returning to his house. I walked home with him, and said good-bye at his door.

"I wonder if we shall ever meet again?" he said, resting his hand on my shoulder.

"Yes," I answered laughing. "You and Bogdanovitch are going to practise medicine in London."

CHAPTER XI

IN THE WAKE OF THE ROTA

At half-past ten the following morning a *droshka* with a pair of serviceable black horses was at the entrance of the hotel. Petrus was stowing my baggage under the seat, whilst Ivan tightened the girths of his saddle and inspected the stirrup leathers and bridle with a critical eye.

Anatovitch had found time to come and see me start, in spite of our farewell of the night before. He was with me for about an hour, and embraced me affectionately before I left my room.

There was yet another person who lamented my departure, and he was the hotel proprietor. I think he was wondering who would be the next to order his imported champagne. It cheered him considerably when I told him that I should be back in Tomsk in a few weeks.

So we took the road eastwards, Petrus driving with the mantle of Jehu and Ivan cantering behind the *droshka*.

We were soon clear of the town, and its spires and domes glinted fitfully through the cloud of dust which rose in our wake. Then we entered the forest, and the scent of the trees and the songs of the birds filled my mind with pleasant fancies, until

the thought of the tens of thousands who had tramped that road in chains and, bitter anguish recalled me to the stern realities of Russian life. The dust which we scattered light-heartedly had been trodden by the feet of men, women, and children who trailed their weary steps along the great highway of misery and destitution, urged on by the whips of their mounted escort, or left to die forgotten by the wayside.

By half-past one we had covered twenty miles of the road, and stopped at a farmhouse to water the horses. An old man came out and invited me to enter the house. I was surprised to see no icon in the room to which he conducted me, and I asked the reason of the absence of this emblem, universal in Russia.

"We are not Christians," the old man hastened to inform me, "we are Sabbatarians."

He went on to explain that the Sabbatarians regard themselves as the only true Jews, and observe laws which differ materially from those of the recognised Children of Israel. I regretted that I had not time to be enlightened further on the subject; but the horses were ready, and I would not keep them waiting.

I offered the old man some money, but he refused to take anything, and expressed the hope that I would visit him on my return.

The road was no longer in good order, and our rate of progress was necessarily slower. We blundered along in a dense cloud of dust for several hours, and arrived at last at a dilapidated wooden

farmhouse, where we again stopped to rest the horses. A woman, who appeared to be the sole occupant of the place, told me that it was fourteen versts to Atchinna, where we could obtain good accommodation for the night.

We started once more, and it was dark when we arrived at the village. Petrus found a good house where we could lodge, and he and Ivan divided the night into watches, each mounting guard in turn over my door.

At daybreak we started again. For five days we travelled without any incident worth recording. The road lay through huge forests and across open plains. Sometimes we crossed rivers and streams on rough wooden bridges, at others we splashed through fords. The horses had stood the hard going well, and at sunset on the fifth day we had made 165 miles.

I despatched Petrus to find a shelter for all of us for the night. He returned shortly, and led the way to a lowly house in the vicinity. The owner of it came out to greet us, apologising for the poverty of his abode, but assuring us of his willingness to serve us if we wished to stay.

There was no question of wishing with me, for the evening was falling and there was no other accommodation available. So I followed the man into his house, whilst Ivan and Petrus stabled the horses in a shed behind it.

After I had eaten of the fare which our host and his wife provided, I strolled out on to the road. It was a lovely evening, and the air was laden with the fragrance of perfumed trees and wild flowers. The

short twilight of the East was rapidly sinking to the darkness of night, and here and there in the opal sky a star shone with lonely brilliance.

Ivan had evidently seen me leave the house and take the road through the forest; for I noticed that he was following me at a respectful distance. In the daytime I was never out of this man's sight, and for half of the night he watched by my door, resigning his charge to Petrus reluctantly when it was his turn to mount guard.

I had walked some little distance when in front of me I saw a man slink out of the woods on to the road. He caught sight of me at once and darted into the thicket again. I hailed him and called him to me. After a few moments hesitation he emerged from his hiding-place and came towards me.

Never in my life have I seen a rougher and more wretched-looking individual. His hair and beard were matted all over his head and face, his clothes were in rags, and his feet were sticking out through the remnants of his boots. He stood a few yards off and regarded me suspiciously from head to foot without speaking.

I asked him if he were an inhabitant of the neighbourhood. He laughed drearily and answered that he was anxious to get out of the neighbourhood as quickly as possible, but that, unfortunately, he did not know the way.

"And even if I did, I think I should starve before I got through," he concluded bitterly.

"Where is your home then?" I asked.

"Vilna," he answered. "And I have been six

weeks wandering in these cursed forests, and cannot find the road."

"But if your home is in Vilna, how do you come to be here?"

"Oh," he said, "I am not here of my own free will, you may depend on that. I did something which offended the police, and they sent me to Irkutsk Government for ten years; but I did not stop with them for more than a couple of months when they got me there. I left them a long time ago."

"But surely you were chained," I suggested. I was not at all sure that the man was not an impostor, who was trying to work on my sympathies by the story of his escape from a penal settlement. It was quite possible that he was nothing but a common *bradjaga*.

"They put me to gold washing," he answered "and my chains were off during the day—and so was I. That must be about nine months ago. I have begged my way thus far, tramping by night and lying up during the day. Then I came to these forests and I lost myself."

"Who has fed you?" I asked.

"At the farms and villages I have begged for food, and they generally give me something. The Sabbatarians are the best. They let me shelter in their barns, and sometimes give me a little money."

I mentioned the possibility of his re-capture; but the long months of wandering unmolested had weakened his apprehension on this score.

"I do not think they will take me again," he said carelessly. "At any rate, I am as free as a beast in the woods at present."

I called to Ivan, who, I knew, was not far off. When the wretched tramp saw a second man approaching he drew off hurriedly to the woods again, and it was with difficulty that I persuaded him to return, assuring him that he need fear nothing from us.

I told Ivan to take him quietly to the shed where our horses were stabled, and to give him some food, and then to try and make him more presentable in appearance. For I felt that it was useless to endeavour to help the fellow in his present condition of raggedness. His appearance would arouse immediate suspicion wherever he went. What he needed most was a new suit of clothes, and I was glad that, acting on Anatovitch's advice, I had brought several changes with me.

Ivan entered into the scheme without any display of his feelings in the matter. It was impossible to judge whether he regarded it favourably or not. But he had a suggestion to make which was eminently practical, namely, that the man should stay where he was until it was quite dark before he came to the shed.

We left him seated by the roadside, with instructions to wait until it was dark when Ivan would fetch him.

I returned to the house, and found that our poor host and his wife had done all that they could to make us comfortable. The man came to my room to

bid me good-night, and asked if there were anything more he could do for us. I thanked him, and said that we should be starting early in the morning, and I should therefore be obliged if he would leave out the *samovar* so that my servants could make tea before we started.

In about an hour's time, when the good people of the house were asleep in their bed, I went out to the shed to see the horses. The spectacle which confronted me as I opened the door was one which I shall never forget.

Petrus was holding a candle in his hand which illumined the tall, solemn figure of Ivan girt about the waist with an old sack, which did duty as an apron, and with a large pair of scissors in his hand. Seated on an old box between them was the unfortunate tramp, half shorn of his matted locks and beard and looking the picture of dejection. There was enough hair on the floor to stuff a pillow. Petrushka was busy giving advice to Ivan on tonsorial art, and pointing with the butt end of the candle to indicate where the finishing touches were required. Ivan, of course, was perfectly grave and silent, and wholly absorbed in the operation.

I did not interrupt them; but told Ivan when he had completed the tramp's toilet to bring him to my room.

It was a long time before Ivan appeared, and announcing "All is ready" showed the wanderer into the room. The change in the man's appearance was most remarkable. He glanced at himself in the broken mirror on the wall, and I heard him mutter:

"I must be dreaming!"

I bade him sit down, and talk quietly, so as not to arouse the people of the house. By degrees I got his story from him. He was a lawyer's assistant in Vilna, and a member of a revolutionary society. One day a certain member of the society was arrested in Moscow, and papers were found in his possession, including a list of the members of the society. Within twenty-four hours over one hundred and fifty men and women were arrested in various parts of Russia as a result of this one man's arrest. The semblance of a trial was given them, and most of them were ordered to Siberia. For his part, he was sentenced to ten years.

In order to test his veracity I asked him several questions about people in Vilna whom I knew there, and he answered correctly. I also asked him for what lawyer he was working, and he gave me his name and address. He further told me that he had been educated at the Real School, and could speak German and French.

"Now," I said, "it is not necessary for you to know who I am; but if I am going to help you, will you keep your mouth shut and do what I tell you?"

He promised secrecy and obedience. Indeed, I think he would have promised anything at that moment.

"Where do you want to go?" I asked.

"I have an uncle living in Paris. I think it would be best for me to go to him if I can get there."

"If I advance you money to go to Paris, will you promise to pay me back with 5 per cent. interest?" I asked.

The man looked at me in open-eyed astonishment, and then burst out laughing.

"It is no laughing matter," I said; "and I will trouble you not to make so much noise. If I offer to advance you money I shall expect to be repaid. I am not a travelling philanthropist."

The man sobered down at once.

"I will pay you, Bareen, whenever I can. I am a young man and I can earn a living."

I told Ivan to take the man outside, whilst I opened my belt and took from it 200 roubles and a blank passport and a *chorosho povidenia.*

I asked the man to come in again, and left Ivan outside.

"From Tomsk to Kovno costs on the railway about twenty roubles," I said. "From Kovno to Berlin sixty marks. From Berlin to Paris sixty-five marks, in all about eighty roubles. That will leave you 120." I handed him the notes. "At night time you can get over the frontier with official sanction for two roubles, and you can use the balance for incidental expenses. Now for your passport and *chorosho povidenia.* Here they are, and you can fill them in for yourself."

The astonished man was biting his finger to make sure that he was awake. I asked him if his finger hurt, but he did not answer.

"Now I shall trouble you for a receipt for my

bill," I said, and I made out the following account:

	R.	K.
To one hair-cutting and shaving . . .	0	50
„ one suit of clothes, *kaftan*, and boots .	11	0
„ cash	200	0
„ one passport and *chorosho povidenia* .	50	0
	261	50

The man signed it with his name, David Margolius, of Vilna, and added what he hoped would be his Paris address—41 Rue Ordinaire.

Then I called in Ivan, and handed over David Margolius to his charge.

The next morning I asked him how he intended to get to Tomsk.

"I shall walk," he said. "It is safer."

"But you have nothing to be afraid of," I told him. "You have clear papers and need not fear the devil himself. The authorities will hardly be looking out for you after a lapse of nine months, and they would not recognise you if they came across you."

I arranged with our host to send back one of my servants to Tomsk for the sum of five roubles. The man had not noticed whether I came with three servants or two, and his suspicions were not aroused.

And so we said farewell to David Margolius.

"Some day, when I return from inspecting my gold mines, I may meet you in Paris," I said; "there is no telling."

But I have never seen or heard of Margolius again to this day. I hope that he won safely through to the avuncular residence in Paris; and perhaps some day I will call at 41 Rue Ordinaire, and present my little account for payment with 5 per cent. interest.

CHAPTER XII

THE WIDOW

On the seventh day of our journey I knew that we must be nearing the *rota*. We had travelled about 200 miles, and the gallant little horses were beginning to show signs of wear. There are but few breeds of horses in the world who could do what they had done—an average of over thirty miles a day for six days, with a clumsy *droshka*, on bad roads. But the Tartar steed needs no commendation from me—his endurance is proverbial.

A tramp on the road begged alms, and I stopped the *droshka* in the hope of gaining some information from him.

He told me that he was on his way to Tomsk, and that he could afford to be leisurely in his movements as he was not one of those escaped convicts, for whom he expressed the greatest contempt, and therefore he was not in a hurry.

I asked him how far we were from Krasnoiarsk, and he replied that he thought it was about 200 versts.

"There is a convict caravan about fifty versts ahead of you, Bareen," he said. "When you come up with them be careful of your belongings, for they will steal whatever they can lay their hands on."

I gave him a small coin and thanked him for his advice, and we drove on.

The morning was young, and I knew that with fair "going" we should be on the heels of the *rota* by sunset. I was elated and excited at the prospect of coming to grips with my undertaking. It was five months since I received Dr. Bogdanovitch's cablegram in San Francisco, and now, at last, I was within striking distance of my objective. To-morrow, perhaps, I should see Kolka. And what then? Well, I would not return empty-handed to Tomsk, that was certain. One does not travel 11,000 miles at great personal inconvenience for the sake of saying "How do you do?" to a convict. I looked from Petrus, driving the wiry little blacks, to Ivan, cantering on the roadside; neither of them knew the errand on which we were bent, but I felt that I could trust them both to see me through with it. My third ally I wore around my waist, and I had greater confidence in the power of my belt than even in Ivan, the imperturbable.

At five o'clock we arrived at a village and stopped to rest the horses. I learned from an inhabitant that there was a Government halting-station for convicts ten versts further on, and that the *rota* had passed through the village in the morning, and would be halted there, probably for several days.

Accordingly I sent Petrus on Ivan's horse to find a house where we could put up within a verst or two of the camp. I always employed Petrus as "quarter-master" as he spoke the dialect of the

country, whereas Ivan was scarcely intelligible to the inhabitants.

When I gave Petrushka the order—I think it dawned on his stolid mind that I contemplated the rescue of a prisoner from the *rota*—he gave the invariable answer: "Tak totchno gospodin," and rode off down the road.

I gave him an hour's start, and then followed, with Ivan driving, in the *droshka*.

It was eight o'clock when we arrived at the house which Petrus had found for our accommodation, a dilapidated shanty standing a little way back from the road in a clearing in the forest. The owner of it was a widow with three grown-up daughters and a son, a boy of nine years old.

The old woman was anxious to make us as comfortable as possible, and ordered the girls about in the preparation of our supper and rooms.

I noticed that Petrushka had already made himself quite at home, and was even paying marked attentions to one of the daughters, a proceeding which Ivan regarded with lofty disapproval.

After I had eaten the meal provided, I asked the widow to stay and talk to me for a few minutes. She was a garrulous old lady and made no difficulties on the conversational score. She was soon chattering of her private affairs to me without reserve. Her husband, who had been a convict, died several years ago. He had been sentenced to *voilnoie poselenia*, and, after serving his term, had settled in the country. She had been thirty years in Siberia, and all her children had been born on the Irkutsk border.

I ventured to ask her for what reason her husband had been convicted. She admitted candidly that he had been implicated in a fire which had broken out in a government building in Smolensk, and had been sentenced to ten years hard labour followed by *voilnoie poselenia*. She had accompanied her husband to Siberia and they had lived there ever since.

Having given me this much information about herself at great length and with many digressions, she then proceeded to question me.

I was very frank with her. I informed her that I was going to the Government of the Amurs to visit a friend who was interested in a gold mine there, and that I should probably visit China before my return. The ice having thus been broken, and a friendly footing established between us, I turned the conversation to other channels. And it was not long before we were on the subject of convicts and their treatment. On this point the old lady was full of information. She told me that at some time or other every convict makes an attempt to escape. Her husband had several golden opportunities; but at the last moment he had always held back, preferring to remain quietly with his wife, to await the time when he could settle down in the territory appointed to convicts who have served their term. Others would escape and perish of cold and starvation in the country. The long, severe winter was all in favour of the prison guards; and few who escaped ever reached Europe; whilst many of them returned of their own free will.

From the abstract I gradually piloted the old woman to the concrete, and questioned her on the neighbouring halting-station and the *rota* of convicts which had just arrived there.

"Oh, yes," she said, in answer to my inquiries. "There is a large *rota* there now. My little boy went there to-day, and he tells me there are about 600, many of them women. It is a regular village. I am sure I hope we shall make something out of them."

I did not understand what she meant, but she explained that when a *rota* was encamped at the halting-station her daughters went with provisions to sell to the prisoners. In fact, she regarded the advent of a caravan of prisoners as a sort of "season," when trade might be regarded as brisk.

"In my husband's life-time we made a lot of money from the camp; but it was a dangerous game, and we don't do *that* any longer."

Here again was an enigmatical statement. What was it, I asked myself, that her husband had done which she dared not do? But it is a difficult thing to fix any statement made in the garrulous, irresponsible chatter of an elderly widow, and I let it pass with a mental note. I asked her about the escort, and learned that the caravan was under the command of a captain, who was apparently slack in his duties, as it was reported that several of the prisoners had escaped from under the noses of the escort. I was glad to hear that.

At this point in our conversation Ivan entered the room and asked permission to speak to me. The old

lady withdrew, and Ivan closed the door behind her.

"Bareen," he said impressively, "believing that the movements of the *rota* are of interest to you, I went to the halting-station this evening; and I have ascertained that they are to march again on Thursday morning."

"Thank you, Ivan," I replied. "Are the horses all right?"

"They will need several days' rest, Bareen, otherwise they will be useless when we want them. To-day is Monday, by Thursday they will be rested."

I told him to get some sleep and let Petrus mount guard. And he withdrew in stately silence. Then I called in the old lady again and we continued our conversation.

"So some of the prisoners have managed to escape," I said, taking up the subject where it had been dropped.

The old woman looked at me curiously, and then laughed.

"Why not trust me, Bareen?" she asked confidentially. "You can speak without ceremony to me. I will serve you if I can."

"Very well, then," I answered. "Listen to me. There is a certain young man in the *rota* whom I am going to rescue. The caravan will be at the halting-station until Thursday morning, and I must get him away before they leave. If you can help me to accomplish this successfully I will give you 200 roubles for yourself and a 100 for each of your children—600 roubles in all. But if I find that

there is any treachery on your part, or if you do anything to upset my plans, I will not be responsible for what may happen to you and your children. Do you understand?"

The old woman fell to crossing herself vigorously, and calling on the Boje Materi to bear witness that she would serve me with her life. Her excitement was so great that her words were scarcely intelligible. I gathered from the torrent of eloquence which my offer and threat called forth, that she doubted the existence of so great wealth as 600 roubles, that she would be quite content to do anything I asked her for ten, and that the Holy Mother and various saints would back her up in her honest efforts to earn a little money.

When she had calmed down I produced a fifty rouble note and handed it to her as a token of good faith. She took it in a hand trembling with emotion, and fingered it lovingly. Never in her life had she possessed so much money at one time, and it was impossible for her to realise that 550 roubles more might be earned in two days. She began to cry hysterically and flung herself on the ground, kissing my feet and declaring that the Holy Mother had sent me from heaven to bless her and her children. The situation was embarrassing; but there was nothing for me to do but submit to her blandishments and await her return to a practical frame of mind.

Presently she rose from the floor and sat down again at the table, and there was an expression of alert cunning in her eyes, which gave me hope that

she would prove a useful ally, and cheap even at 600 roubles.

"Well," I said, "how do you propose to earn your money, matushka?"

She came across to me, and laying her hand on my arm said:

"Come with me, Bareen, and I will show you something."

She led the way to a small, ill-furnished bedroom at the back of the house. In the corner was a plain wooden bedstead, which she requested me to help her to move. We carried it out into the middle of the floor, and taking a pointed steel rod from the corner she prised up a board in the floor, and then another.

"You can go in there, Bareen," she explained, pointing to the hole in the floor. "And you can come out sixty paces away in the forest."

As I peered into the black cavity below the floor a sensation came over me as though I were dreaming, and the little old woman holding the flickering candle above her head and standing at the edge of the abyss appeared to me as the genie in an Arabian tale. I almost expected to see Kolka emerge from the opening and fling himself into my arms. The whole episode seemed absurd and extravagant, and I laughed. My laughter awoke me; but still the little old woman was standing by the side of the hole in the floor with her candle in her hand, looking at me with cunning eyes.

"But why?" I exclaimed, pointing downwards.

"My husband worked at it, on and off, for five years,"

she replied, "and it brought him in a little money. But no one has been there since my husband died."

Then I began to understand what the old woman meant when she said that in her husband's day they used to make a lot of money out of the prisoners' camp at the halting-station.

I had evidently come to the right house for assistance.

The old woman put the boards in their places, and we carried the bed back to the corner of the room. No one could have guessed at the existence of the subterranean passage from the appearance of the floor, the boards fitted exactly, and the bed stood above them in ingenuous simplicity.

"I will send Soinia down to-morrow to see that it is all clear," said the old woman, leading the way back to my room. "And if you, Bareen, will do as I advise you, it will be an easy matter."

It may be imagined I was only too anxious to have the advice of one who knew the coast so well, and I assured her that I was all attention.

"Then you must go to the camp in the morning and try to make the acquaintance of the captain."

I told her that I had a letter of introduction to him in my pocket.

"That is good," she answered; "then there will be no suspicion of you. My three girls will be about the camp, selling vegetables to the prisoners. Get your man into their hands, and leave the rest to them. And keep your two servants out of the way. They can do no good, and they might excite the suspicion of the guards."

She took up her candle and went towards the door.

"Good-night, to you, Bareen," she said. "May the Holy Mother protect you. Fifty roubles! And I know not how many more to come. May all the saints watch over you, Bareen."

CHAPTER XIII

A POST-MORTEM EXAMINATION

In the morning I started out for the camp, wearing my blue spectacles again. I shall not attempt to describe my feelings during that short walk of one mile which led me to my journey's uttermost limit; but I knew instinctively that the end was to be success.

At the halting-station the prisoners were in groups in the "compound." Some were playing cards for small stakes, as the heaps of kopeks denoted. Others were washing their clothes and laying out their red *rubashkas* to dry in the sun. There were others who sat with their heads resting on their hands, thinking. It was probably this accursed habit of thinking that had brought them to their present pass; but still they were thinking, and they cannot break themselves of it.

I looked anxiously at every group; but Kolka was not amongst them. I began to feel apprehensive lest he had escaped before I could come to fetch him. The very idea alarmed me; for I was selfish enough to wish to effect his rescue myself, since I had taken so much pains in the matter.

At the outskirts of the camp I could see women with their baskets and trays, selling trifles to the

prisoners—the widow's daughters were amongst them, and I have no doubt they marked my arrival.

I approached the entrance of a wooden building, which looked as if it might be the orderly-room of the commander of the convoy, and gave my letter of introduction to a soldier who was standing outside, and requested him to deliver it to the captain. The man took the envelope and went in, and as he did so some one passed him coming out of the door. It was Kolka.

I looked quickly round me; nobody was near. I began to hum a song, which had been dear to us both in our student days at Heidelberg. The notes reached Kolka, and he started slightly and paused. I called his name softly, "Kolka!"

His face went deathly white, and he came a few steps towards me with uncertainty.

I took off my glasses and looked him straight in the face.

"I am Carl," I whispered. "Get ready to come with me. Don't speak. Walk away from me."

He turned obediently and walked off, and as he went I whispered, "All well at home."

Then the orderly came out and asked me to follow him. He conducted me through an outer room, where several soldiers lounged on forms or stared out of the window, and ushered me into the captain's office.

He was a plethoric-looking man of about forty, clad in a white uniform; and he came forward to greet me with outstretched hand. He inquired after the well-being of his friend Dr. Anatovitch, and the

other officers of the garrison of Tomsk, to which inquiries I replied to the best of my knowledge, accepting a cigarette from the case which he proffered. He spoke in French, and I could see that he was very proud of his linguistic accomplishments.

I asked him whether he had ever been in London.

"Certainly," he replied. "I know well Piccadilly and the Continental Hotel. Ah, but I had a gay time in London! But I never could learn the language. There are only five words that I can remember, and they were always on my lips."

I inquired what the immortal five words might be?

"Koom and kiss me kvick!" he replied, his fat sides shaking with laughter at the remembrance of his experiences.

He was quite satisfied with himself, and it was to my purpose to keep him in a good humour. We chatted on for some minutes, though I must confess that most of the captain's conversation went in at one ear and out of the other. He asked me to stay and dine with him, and I accepted the invitation, in the hope of learning something more of the plans of the convoy, and the arrangements made for guarding the prisoners.

Dinner was served to us in the office at about two o'clock. During the meal I questioned him on the subject of his present duties, and asked whether he liked convoying prisoners.

"It is tedious sort of work," he answered. "The common criminals are easy enough to deal with; but the 'politicals'—pfui!"

He went on eating in silence, and I feared that he

had dismissed the subject with this exclamation of disgust. But presently he began again.

"'The criminals want watching or they will try to escape; but we lose very few 'politicals,' unless they happen to die. The trouble with them is that they seem to think that they are conducting us to Siberia, and not we them. They are full of complaints about everything, and want this, that, and the other, until my life is almost bothered out of me by them."

He pointed out of the window to a group of prisoners standing together in the "compound."

"You see that fellow there in the gold eye-glasses," he said. I followed the direction of his hand and nodded assent.

"He is the law amongst the 'politicals'—a dangerous Nihilist, of the name of Yankevitch. He was a lawyer in Orel. The cursed fellow puts all sorts of notions into the others' heads. The man next to him is a young doctor from Moscow, Grazinski by name; and the fellow behind him was a Petersburg journalist. They are a crew of Nihilists of a desperate order."

At that moment Kolka joined the group, and I asked the captain if he were another dangerous man.

"That one? Oh, dear no, he is as harmless as a child. He, too, is a Moscow doctor, Bogdanovitch is his name. There was likely to be trouble amongst the others yesterday, and he counselled them to observe regulations, and kept them in order. I ordered his chains off for it; but he refused to have them taken off unless I treated the others in the same way. As we shall be in camp here for a few

days, I let him have his way, and told the sergeant to have all the chains removed until we take the road again. So I hope they are happy!"

I turned the conversation to other topics, and whilst we were still talking a sergeant came in and saluted the captain.

"A woman in the political ward and her child are dead, your High-born."

"How is that?" the captain inquired indifferently.

"Dr. Bogdanovitch and Dr. Grazinski examined the bodies at my request, and they are of opinion that the woman strangled her child and then herself with a rope."

"Damn her!" said the captain. "It means more reports to make out."

"May I offer my services in this affair?" I said. "I should be pleased to make a post-mortem examination if it would assist you."

"Certainly, doctor," the captain answered. "I should be obliged if you would. The sergeant will show you the way. For my part I hate the sight of corpses. It takes away my appetite for days."

I followed the sergeant out into the "compound," thankful to be quit of the company of the brute. He took me to a small, ill-lighted room and requested me to enter. He would go no further than the threshold himself; for in Russia, especially amongst the uneducated classes, there is a fear of the dead.

On a wooden bench, similar to those I had seen in the prison at Tomsk, the bodies of the woman and

her child were lying side by side. Poor soul! She had tasted life, and found it exceeding bitter. Who shall cast stones at her for trusting to the mercy of God the life which He had given her, and the life which she had transmitted to her helpless child, rather than face the miseries which the span of human existence held out to both of them?

The incentives to crime are manifold—some are revolting, some are pitiable, and some are beyond the limits of human criticism. In the latter class was the crime of the miserable woman who lay cold and dead before me, with her child by her side. Then, in the presence of the dead, I saw my opportunity.

I went back to the door and called to the sergeant.

"You said that some doctors had already examined the bodies?" I asserted.

"Yes, *gospodin*, two doctors who are prisoners have examined them."

"I should like to see them," I continued. "The courtesy of my profession demands that they should be present, even if they are prisoners."

The sergeant bowed to my ruling on the point of medical etiquette.

"By all means, *gospodin*. They shall be here in a minute."

He went out, and I heard him call their names aloud.

"Dr. Grazinski, Dr. Bogdanovitch, you are wanted."

And in a few minutes they came to me in the little, dark room, where the bodies lay on plank beds.

The sergeant closed the door behind them and returned to the other prisoners in the "compound."

In a moment Kolka's arms were around me—

"You need not fear Grazinski," he said, "he is my friend. You can speak before him."

"I have come to take you away," I explained—and for the moment that was all I could say.

"I knew it!" said Grazinski. "I knew we should all escape in time; but it must be one by one. It is your turn first, Bogdanovitch—good luck to you!"

Then Kolka began to reel off a string of questions; but I stopped him. There was no time for explanations, only for plans.

"There is only one clear day before you march," I said; "it must be to-morrow. I have made all the arrangements, including passports. Keep close to those girls who are selling things in the camp, they will give you word when to go, but don't do anything on your own responsibility." Kolka looked doubtfully from me to Grazinski—

"I should like to take Grazinski and Yankevitch with me," he said, "I can't leave them behind."

"You must arrange that amongst yourselves," I answered, "and let me know through the girls what you decide, by noon to-morrow." And then I pointed to the two bodies lying on the bench before us.

"We are here to investigate the causes of death," I reminded them. "Are you both agreed?"

"Poor, miserable woman!" said Grazinski, "she chose another means of escape for herself and little one."

I opened the door and we went out into the

"compound," talking loudly, so that others could hear, of the result of our examination.

I returned with the sergeant to the captain's office, and verified the report of Drs. Grazinski and Bogdanovitch.

He gave me a cigarette, and we once more fell into desultory conversation. I think he was pleased to have some one to talk to; and he asked me many questions about my intended journey to the Amurs and China. So that when I rose to say good-bye, I ventured to ask permission to call on him again, and he requested me to come the next day, as they were to march on the day after; and so I took my leave of him.

CHAPTER XIV

A TEST OF SIGHT AND SPEECH

OUTSIDE the captain's quarters I met the sergeant again. He was polite and communicative, and walked with me to the entrance of the camp.

"How do you like this sort of life, sergeant?" I asked.

"Well, doctor," he answered, "I have been in service for fourteen years, and I should not know what to lay my hand to if I gave up soldiering."

"Then you like taking prisoners to Siberia?"

"No, no, doctor; it is dirty work. This is only my second trip with a convoy."

"But you do your work with zeal, of course," I said.

"I don't know about that. We obey orders."

"I suppose it happens now and then that prisoners manage to escape—what do you do then?"

"We bring them back, doctor, if we can find them; and if not, then they are marked down on our reports as dead."

"Oh," I said, "I always understood that if you let a convict escape you had to take his place."

The sergeant laughed at the idea.

"That would be a pretty state of affairs!" he exclaimed. "All the escort would soon be prisoners

in Siberia; for there is not a prisoner but tries to escape at the first opportunity."

"How is it that your prisoners are not chained?" I asked. "I was told that all Siberian convicts had chains on their legs."

"So they have, doctor, so they have. Look at them over there."

He pointed to a group of men in a corner of the camp which I had not before observed. They were all chained.

"Those are the common prisoners," he explained, "criminals and poor 'politicals.' The gentry whom you saw this morning are treated with more consideration than the common folk. It is as the captain orders."

He hesitated for a moment as though he would say something more, and finally made up his mind to risk it.

"I will tell you a secret, doctor," he said confidentially. "I don't believe that some of those high-born gentlemen will ever reach their destination."

"Do you mean that they will kill themselves, as that miserable woman did?" I asked.

"God knows," he replied, with a twinkle of amusement in his eyes. "But if ever they get to the penal settlements they are greater fools than I take them to be. As to killing, I don't think they mean to do it for themselves; and, so far as I am concerned, I never yet could get a rifle to shoot straight at such men as they are, and yet I am considered a good shot. Do you understand me, doctor?"

I replied that I grasped his meaning perfectly,

and appreciated the humane sentiments which he entertained for the prisoners under his charge.

"Some day you will be recompensed for your humanity," I said.

"Oh, yes," he answered, "I can always get a begging certificate when I am unfit for further service."

"I hope," I said, "that it will not be so bad as that."

"We had better not talk of it," said the sergeant dejectedly.

We had now arrived at the limits of the camp, beyond which the sergeant could not pass.

"I have been much interested in our conversation," I said, "and I should like to continue it at some other time. Could you meet me somewhere on the road near here this evening?"

He expressed himself delighted at the prospect of further talk with me. He would be off duty at nine o'clock and would walk down the road to meet me. So we parted.

When I returned to the widow's house I found the old lady arrayed in her best clothes, a white cloth was on the table, and the *samovar* awaited me.

Ivan was not looking altogether happy. His instructions from his master had been to watch over me, and he was uneasy when I was out of sight. Petrus, too, was unhappy because the widow's youngest daughter, Soinia, had been at the camp all day, whilst he was compelled to stay at home.

The widow questioned me on the result of my visit to the camp, and I told her the arrangements

which I had made with my friend, by which he was to receive communications from me through her daughters, and wait for word from them before he attempted to escape. She approved of my arrangement, and then informed me of the steps which she had taken. She had examined the long disused subterranean chamber and passage, and found them in working order. She had sent Petrus off with the horses and *droshkà* to a stable a verst away. Petrus could go over there twice daily to look after the horses; but it would not do to have them on the premises.

After supper I told Ivan that I was going out again, but that I should not require him to come with me as I was bent on an entirely peaceful undertaking. By nine o'clock I was on the road, walking slowly in the direction of the camp.

I had not gone far before I heard footsteps approaching me. I stopped in the shadow of the trees to see who it might be, and in another moment the sergeant came up.

"Good evening, sergeant," I said, going up to him.

"Good evening, doctor."

I glanced up and down the road, and listened, but I could neither see nor hear any one.

"Shall we sit down by the roadside and talk?" I suggested.

We sat down side by side at the edge of the forest.

"Tell me, sergeant," I said, "if I were to place a fifty rouble note on your eye could you see?"

"No, doctor. I should not be able to see with that eye; but I could see out of the other."

"Oh, you could! Well then fifty roubles on your other eye would make you totally blind?"

"Yes, doctor, I should be blind for life. There are so many colours in a 100 rouble note that it is impossible to see through it I am told."

"Yes," I said; "the colours in a 100 rouble note resemble the flesh of the back of a thinking man when the Cossacks have been at him with their knouts."

"That is very true, gospodin, very true."

"Now let us come to an understanding. I place a fifty rouble note on each of your eyes, and you are blind. Now supposing that I place another upon your mouth, would you lose your power of speech?"

"A man cannot speak with his mouth full of paper, gospodin. You are a doctor who knows well the medicine to prescribe for every disease."

"Very good," I said. "Now when you are blind and speechless, what are you going to do?"

"You may leave that to me, doctor. All I want to know is which are the birds, and how many are to be turned into the woods? You shall have as many as you wish; but you must remember that we have only a little more than 600 of them, and therefore, gospodin, you will not ask for 700 birds."

"Good heavens, no!" I only want four or five at the outside," I exclaimed, astounded by the potency of the medicine I had prescribed.

"Only five!" said the sergeant, "then you can take off fifty roubles."

"No, I shall not take any off; but if you make a good job of it I will add another fifty. So you will have 200 roubles."

"*Boje moi, Boje moi!* I shall be rich. The devil take soldier's service when I have 200 roubles!"

"To-morrow morning I will come up to the camp, and when I leave the captain's quarters you can follow me, and I will tell you which men I want. Shall you work it single-handed?"

"There is a man whom I can trust," said the sergeant. "I shall warn him for escort duty to-morrow, and I will give him something for his trouble."

"When you let them go turn them into the woods, as you suggested. They will be looked after there," I said, thinking of the widow's daughters.

"Very good, doctor; and as soon as they are gone I shall raise a hue and cry, and fall in the guard and start in pursuit; but we shall take the opposite direction, and we shall not find them."

"And they will be returned as dead," I said, remembering the conversation of the morning.

"Eventually, they will be returned as dead," the sergeant assented, "but not until we have given up all hope of finding them. It would be advisable for you to continue to visit the captain in camp for as long as we remain here."

"You can leave that to me," I answered, and we rose from the ground.

"Then I will say good-night to you, gospodin."

I gave him a note for twenty-five roubles before we parted.

"You are a business man, doctor," he exclaimed, pocketing the note.

"Business is business," I answered, and turned towards the widow's house, well satisfied with my interview with the sergeant.

I had hardly gone a dozen yards when I heard footsteps in the wood moving parallel with me. There could be no question that somebody was watching me. Perhaps he had overheard the whole of my conversation with the sergeant—and what then? I pulled out my pistol and called out: "Who is there?"

"It is I, Bareen," said Ivan, emerging from the cover of the trees on to the road.

"What are you doing at my heels?" I demanded, for I had told him to stay within the house; and I was a little ashamed of myself for being frightened into drawing my pistol.

Ivan was as imperturbable as ever, and made no apologies; he simply gave his explanation.

"It was my master's order, Bareen, that I should protect you with my life, if necessary, and therefore I followed you out this evening."

"You might have upset all my plans by coming," I protested.

"The Bareen will lose nothing through my interference," he answered with perfect respect, and no show of temper.

We walked back to the house together.

The old dame was on pins and needles to hear how the affair was progressing. I told her that the arrangements were made, and that all she had to do

was to lay in a plentiful supply of food, as there would be several additional mouths to be filled, and to warn her daughters to be on the look-out on the morrow.

"You may depend upon the girls, Bareen," she asserted. "They are steady as rocks."

Then I went to bed; but I could not sleep. Over and over again I reviewed every detail of the scheme, and tried to picture the fulfilment of it. Kolka would tell the girls how many I was to expect; the girls would tell me; and I would tell the sergeant. Then the sergeant would find some pretext for marching them into the woods under escort, and the prisoners would escape and be taken in charge by the widow's daughters and conducted to the house.

Yes, so far it all seemed simple enough, providing no mistake were made in the transmission of the messages.

And then I began to wonder what I should do if the plan failed. I felt very certain that, if necessary, I could bribe the captain of the escort to let them go. But I did not wish to place myself under any obligation to a man of the captain's stamp. Besides, the failure of the first attempt would make it very difficult for the captain to save his face if they managed finally to escape; and supposing that the escape came off successfully, but that afterwards the hiding-place was discovered—what then?

All through the night the doubts and dangers of the undertaking presented themselves with the persistency of the recurring decimal. Here I will make a confession. I hoped and believed that I should

attain my object by peaceable means, but if any man stood in the way of its fulfilment, I was determined to use my pistol rather than fail. I leave it to ethical philosophers to decide in what category my intention should be classed.

Then the day broke, and I went to the open window and looked out. The morning was cool, and the silence of the forest profound. The first rays of the sun shimmered on the dense foliage and penetrated amongst the giant stems of the trees. Soon the other inmates of the house began to move about, and going to the door I bade the widow bring in the *samovar*.

CHAPTER XV

THE ESCAPE

How I managed to pass the time until ten o'clock I do not know. The hours seemed interminable. At last I would wait no longer and set out for the camp.

It was about eleven o'clock when I arrived. The sergeant was on the look-out for me, and took me straight to the little room where the bodies of the woman and her child were still lying awaiting burial. Again he went and called the names of Dr. Bogdanovitch and Dr. Grazinski. I was grateful to the sergeant for giving me this opportunity of speaking to them, and thereby avoiding any misunderstanding which might have arisen had it been necessary to use the widow's daughters as the medium of our communications.

Kolka and Grazinski came in almost immediately, and the sergeant shut the door on us as he had done on the previous day.

"Well," I said, "everything is ready—how many is it to be?"

"Yankevitch, Grazinski, and myself," said Kolka. "There were two others whom I asked, but they prefer to wait until they get to Irkutsk, where they have relations who will help them out of the country

and supply them with money. So they have decided to remain."

"We shall be certain to meet them in London or in Paris in eighteen months' time," said Grazinski.

"Very well," I said, "all you have to do is to obey the sergeant's orders, and look out for the girls with the baskets, and follow them when the time comes."

We cut the interview as short as possible; and then we tenderly carried out the bodies of the woman and her child for interment, so that all might see for what purpose we were together. We placed them on rough stretchers outside the building and covered them over with some pieces of sacking.

Then Kolka and Grazinski walked away and the sergeant came up to me.

"There will only be three," I told him, "Yankevitch, Grazinski, and Bogdanovitch."

"Only three! But what a pity that the others will not go!"

I told him the reason.

"Well," he said, "I owe them to you, and they shall have no trouble when they are ready to go."

"When the birds are free, I will come again and settle up with you," I said.

He was quite satisfied.

"I shall give them their chance at about four o'clock," said he, "and I hope it won't be necessary for me to kick them out of the camp!"

"I don't think so, sergeant," I answered, and with that I left him and went to the captain's quarters.

The captain was busy writing reports, I was told by the orderly; and not wishing to interrupt him in

his duties, I went off towards the part of the camp where the criminal prisoners were quartered.

The poor creatures all begged for a few kopeks. They were a miserable assortment of degraded humanity, with dull, brutish faces, on which crime and suffering had indelibly set their stamp. I left them and went to the women prisoners, and there I found the same state of things as I had seen in Tomsk —only their bread was better. They, too, begged of me, poor souls, and I gave them a few roubles.

Whilst I was still standing amongst them an orderly came up and saluted. The captain, he informed me, would like to see me. I followed him back to the captain's office, and found that gentleman on the point of departure for the next halting-station—I suppose to ascertain that the camp there was in order for his caravan—and wishing to say good-bye to me before he left.

"Is there anything I can do for you, doctor?" he asked.

With the laudable intention of misleading him I asked if he could give me a letter of introduction to any one in Irkutsk. He sat down and wrote a letter to the principal officer there and handed it to me.

"I was interested in examining the general health of your prisoners just now," I said, "I hope that I was not doing wrong?"

"Not at all! Not at all!" the captain replied. "I hope you will do so as much as you like. I will send an orderly round with you."

Then he wished me a hearty farewell, and I left

him in his office making his final preparations before starting and followed the orderly into the camp.

I made a very careful examination of a number of the prisoners, prolonging my inspection as much as possible, for the reason that I did not wish to leave the camp until five o'clock or later.

I found one woman so badly affected with sarcoma, that I sent a note to the captain that she ought to be removed from the other prisoners. The captain had not left the camp and my note delayed him still further. He sent an order back that the woman was to be left behind.

Just after three o'clock I was called upon to exercise my skill in midwifery; and helped to bring a wretched mortal into a world of misery. So there was another woman to be left behind. But, to my surprise, she requested not to be left; and here was another matter to be referred to the captain. There seemed to be a fate against his leaving the camp that afternoon.

Then I was present at the funeral of the woman and child whose tragedy had been my opportunity. A pope from the neighbouring village conducted the funeral service, and when it was over I walked back with him. He was a sleek-faced, dirty individual, with a rotund stomach and familiar manner.

Just as we reached the main road there was a clatter of horses' feet, and hoarse shouts of command, followed almost immediately by a fusillade of rifle fire. We stopped short on the road, and the pope, green with fear, and his teeth chattering in his head, laid hold of my arm for support.

"Don't move!" he cried, "or we shall be hit by a stray bullet."

I was laughing inwardly at the din and racket which the sergeant was providing for my money. And since the pope refused to move either one way or the other, I was glad to have him holding on to my arm—it gave me quite an air of distinction to have the Holy Russian Church under my protection.

Certainly the sergeant was an excellent stage-manager, and I was enjoying the farce which he had produced with so much effect. "Alarums and excursions" were never more faithfully presented; and a very fair amount of the Tsar's powder was expended on the entertainment.

Whilst we were still standing on the road my sergeant dashed up at full gallop, and reined in his horse within a few feet of us.

"Holy father," he exclaimed in accents of consternation, addressing himself to the pope, "three *brudjagas* have escaped from the camp and run away. It is a terrible affair! I am thankful that the captain had not left the camp, and I reported the affair to him as he was going out. I am sure I don't know what the world is coming to! Yesterday a woman killed her child and herself, and to-day three prisoners break loose."

"But had they not chains on?" asked the pope, leaving his hold on my arm and assuming an air of authority.

"No, father," the sergeant answered.

"How was that?" he demanded.

"The captain thought that they were men to be trusted, and had ordered their chains off."

"Then you can go back and tell your captain to light a candle for them"—a Russian saying that implies "irretrievably lost"—"you will never see them again, that is certain."

The sergeant, whose face showed signs of great determination and zeal for the recovery of the runaways, turned his horse and rode off, and as he turned he gave me a knowing wink.

When he had gone I proposed to the pope that we should walk up to the camp together and see the disturbance. And we arrived a few minutes later.

All the prisoners in the "compound" had their chains on now, and the "politicals" had been confined in the cells and were behind iron bars.

We went to the captain's quarters, and before we arrived at the entrance we could hear his voice. His language was powerful, and would only bear comparison with the remarks of an American travelling salesman who has missed his train. But when he saw the pope and me approaching he at once changed his tone, and, coming out to meet us, bowed his head before the holy man.

"My son," said the pope, "what means all this confusion?"

"This is an unfortunate affair for me, batushka," the captain answered. "A week ago six prisoners escaped and broke their chains and only one of them was recaptured—and he is dead, as he deserves—the tramp!"

"My son," said the pope with reproof, "knowest thou not that the dead are holy?"

"I ask your pardon, batusaka," the captain answered. "I spoke in haste. And now, not an hour ago, three 'politicals' break loose and escape into the woods. The criminals are not of much importance; but the Government cannot stand the loss of political prisoners."

"How did they manage to get away?" asked the holy man.

"Here is the report of the affair as I have taken it down from the sergeant's lips," said the captain, picking up a sheet of paper from the table and handing it to the pope. I read it over his shoulder, and it stated that, shortly after four o'clock, Sergeant Solobov, with five soldiers as an escort, took out the prisoners Grazinski, Bogdanovitch, Yankevitch, Demidov, and Sapoznikoff into the woods to gather certain plants for medical purposes for the benefit of the other prisoners, with the consent of the captain.

Grazinski, Bogdanovitch, and Yankevitch became separated from the other two men and the escort, though they were still within sight. Suddenly the three men, Grazinski, Bogdanovitch, and Yankevitch were seen to throw down the plants which they had collected and run off into the forest in a southerly direction. Sergeant Solobov and two men at once started in pursuit, leaving Demidov and Sapoznikoff in charge of the other three men of the escort, who marched them straight back to camp and gave the alarm. Sergeant Solobov and the two men with him were unable to overtake the fugitives.

Then followed a note of the steps which the captain had taken in the matter. He had at once ordered all the prisoners to be locked up, and had despatched twenty men to assist Sergeant Solobov, and to bring in the escaped prisoners, dead or alive. Sergeant Solobov returned to make his report when the reinforcements reached him.

The pope handed the paper back to the captain, who folded it and put it away.

"The three *brudjagas* will be brought in before the morning, and they shall march in irons for the rest of the journey," he asserted, with a valiant attempt to carry off the incident as lightly as possible. Then he added less confidently: "Dead or alive they must be found, if I have to postpone the march to-morrow."

"I trust, my son, that you will recover them," said the pope. "The neighbourhood is already terrorised by these vagabonds who have escaped from their *rotas*. They steal anything that they can lay hands on. It was brought to my notice only a few days ago that a *begach* (escaped convict) called at a house in the district and demanded food, and, when it was refused him, he murdered the unfortunate householder and made off with everything he could carry from the house. To this day he has not been caught. Now, my son, we have three more to contend with," he concluded reproachfully.

The captain turned to me in despair.

"You see how we have to earn our pay and promotion," he exclaimed. "You have no such state of things in your country, doctor."

"No, indeed!" I answered sympathetically. "I can see what hardships you have to face."

"It is the hardships," said the captain grandiloquently, "that make our soldiers the best in the world."

"Hear! hear!" said the fat priest, clapping his hands. "*Nasha Russkį Mallatchi!*" (Our Russian bravery!)

It is the catch phrase of the Russian army, and I could only smile inwardly when I thought of the value of the vaunted bravery which is purchasable for so few roubles.

As we were still talking to the captain Sergeant Solobov came in covered with dirt and perspiration, and apparently fagged out. He had come to report that the three prisoners had not yet been caught; but that he had obtained information from two sources that they had been seen going towards the south.

"They are making for the Chinese border," said the captain. "We must head them off from that. You must make for the Yenesei, Sergeant Solobov, and don't come back until you have found them. Ah, that scamp, Yankevitch! I always had my fears about him with his gold glasses on his nose. He is at the bottom of it, I'll be bound. But wait until I get him back, and I will decorate him with chains in accordance with his deserts."

Sergeant Solobov had various reasons to bring forward for postponing the pursuit until the next day. The horses were tired; the men had not fed. But the real reason he did not see fit to mention, namely, that he was expecting to meet me quietly in

the evening to receive payment for his day's work. In the end, he prevailed upon the captain to wait until the next morning before despatching a force to cut off the fugitives. At this point I said good-bye to the captain and withdrew, followed by the pope.

When I had gone half-way across the camp I noticed that the pope was still at my side. He seemed to have developed a great fondness for me and a desire to remain in my company. He positively would not let me go until I had contributed something to his privy purse. There is no more systematic beggar in the world than a Russian priest, and this one was no exception to the rule. I had given all my small change to the prisoners in the morning, and I had nothing less than a rouble, and I gave it to him to rid myself of his company.

I don't think he had expected more than five kopeks, for when he saw the rouble he crossed himself a dozen times, and, giving me his blessing, hurried off towards the village with his prize.

CHAPTER XVI

IN HIDING

I LOST no time in returning to the widow's house, and there I was met by the widow, her shifty, little eyes dancing with triumphant cunning.

"You can go to your friends, Bareen, as soon as you please," she said.

I walked straight through the house to the little bedroom at the back, followed by the old lady. Together we removed the bed and she prised up the boards. A wooden step led down to the chamber beneath, and in a moment I was surrounded by the three men. There is no need to dwell on the mutual rejoicings and congratulations which followed. I will only say that, for my part, I felt happier than I can ever remember feeling before or since. By the light which penetrated from the hole in the floor above us, I could see that the widow had spread matting on the floor of the chamber, and there were the remains of a substantial meal still visible on plates and dishes.

After the first greetings were over I told them of my experiences at the camp.

"The captain takes your escape very badly," I said. "He sent a special message to you,

Mr. Yankevitch; when he catches you he will decorate you with chains in accordance with your deserts."

Yankevitch smiled grimly through his glasses, but said never a word. He was a lawyer, and knew well when to speak and when to hold his tongue. It would serve no good purpose to argue about a contingency so improbable as his immediate recapture, and therefore he was silent.

Then I drew Kolka aside and consulted with him. I told him about Anatovitch, and how I had met him in Tomsk, and suggested that I should send Ivan to him with the news; and that Ivan should then go on to Vyatka and tell the good tidings to the old doctor. When this was arranged I left them for awhile, and, putting two hundred rouble notes into an envelope, I strolled down the road towards the camp.

I had not far to go before I met my man; he was waiting for me at the roadside. Without a word I handed him the envelope, and he placed it in his boot and crossed himself.

"Thanks be to the Holy Mother," he said. "This will make me the proprietor of a *kharchevna*."

"When will the convoy be on the move?" I asked, when he had disposed of his money satisfactorily.

"I do not think that we shall march before Monday, doctor," he replied. "The captain is in a great taking about the escape of the prisoners. To-morrow morning I have orders to start in pursuit of them to the Yenesei. I shall return with my men in the evening; and when the captain understands

that they cannot be found that will be the end of the matter. But I do not think that he will order the camp to be moved until Monday. But you must keep your birds caged for some time to come, doctor. Do not let them out until we have left the camp for at least a week. They will be safe enough then."

I promised to be discreet, and we said good-bye.

"If you are in Kharkoff, doctor, in a year's time, I hope you will patronise my *kharchevna*," said the sergeant, and he turned towards the camp.

I returned to the house and again took counsel with my *protégés*.

I gave Kolka his passport and *chorosho povidenia*, which were already made out for him in his own name. I had only one blank passport and *chorosho povidenia* left, and I filled them up for Yankevitch. Grazinski, for the time being, could make use of the passport of Dr. Denmanovitch, which I still kept, until an opportunity arrived of procuring a new one for him. I laid great stress on the necessity of all of them remaining in hiding for a week after the departure of the *rota* from the halting-station, and for as long as they remained in the neighbourhood. Then I wrote a long letter to Anatovitch, and when it was finished I summoned Ivan.

"I am going to send you on a long journey by yourself, Ivan," I said; "are you prepared to go?"

"I shall do whatever the Bareen orders," he answered; and I could not gather from his words or face whether he was pleased to go or not. I thought, perhaps, he might have had some scruples about

leaving me; but the strict obedience of orders was to him the first duty of man.

"You will start to-morrow morning and take this letter to Dr. Anatovitch," I said, handing him the unaddressed envelope. "You must give it to him privately, and he will tell you whether you are to return here or to go to Vyatka."

I was determined that old Dr. Bogdanovitch should hear the news as soon as possible; but I left it for Anatovitch to decide whether he would send on Ivan or a man of his own.

Early the following morning Ivan left on horseback for Tomsk, and there was nothing for us to do but wait developments.

To avoid suspicion I went to see the captain at the camp. He seemed surprised that I was making such a prolonged stay on the road to Irkutsk; but I told him that my horses needed a rest, and that I preferred the quiet beauty of the country to life in the towns, and so I had decided to spend a few days in the neighbourhood whilst my horses recovered their condition. I also told him that the opportunities which he had given me of inspecting the prisoners at the camp had been a source of great interest to me, and that I appreciated his kindness and companionship. May Heaven forgive me!

The captain was still greatly perturbed about the escape of the prisoners, and he sent out patrols on the Friday and Saturday to intercept the fugitives. But, at last, he gave up the search as hopeless, and ordered the march for Monday morning.

I was there to see them start, and a pitiable

spectacle the poor wretches presented as they filed out from the camp on to the road, with their mounted escort to urge them forwards and their heavy chains to keep them back.

The captain bade me an affectionate farewell, and hoped that I would visit his relations if I returned by Moscow. And so they clanked off miserably down the road, and I watched them depart with a feeling of great relief mingled with pity.

Two weeks passed, and still Ivan did not return. The three boys enjoyed life to the fullest extent that their restricted circumstances permitted. All day long they would play like rabbits round a certain tree in the forest which marked the entrance of their burrow, prepared at the approach of any man to bolt into their hole. At night they slept in the little chamber under the floor rolled up in rugs on the ground.

The widow's house stood alone in the forest, and the village was three or four versts away, consequently we saw very few people beyond a casual traveller or tramp on the road now and then. I do not think that my presence in the widow's house was known to any one outside of it.

The restless spirit of the party was Yankevitch. He was always fretting to be gone, and found the restraint on his freedom very trying. Once I had to assert my authority, as leader of the party, to prevent him starting for Tomsk on foot. Kolka and Grazinski backed me up, and Yankevitch was reluctantly compelled to remain where he was.

There was one member of the party who was

supremely happy—and that was Petrushka. Twice daily he went off to the old shed where the horses were stabled to look after them; the rest of the day he spent in the company of the widow's daughters, showing a marked preference for Soinia, the youngest. He was a very simple-minded fellow, and he would have been quite contented to spend the rest of his days in the forest home of his Soinia.

Seventeen days after his departure Ivan returned, bringing a letter from Anatovitch. He implored me to keep my charges in order, and on no account to allow them to break loose or to do anything to jeopardise their safety. He recommended that they should be sent in two parties into Tomsk, where he had arranged a safe quarter for them as they arrived, and he would dispose of them one at a time. He would send back the horses when the first two arrived, and I was to follow with the third. He had sent his own servant to Vyatka with my letter to Dr. Bogdanovitch, as he thought that I should prefer to have Ivan with me. He further informed me that my Tartar friend, the hotel proprietor, was counting the days to my return.

There was no signature to the letter, and the names of Dr. Bogdanovitch and Vyatka were represented by initial letters only.

Ivan stood before me as I read it, silently awaiting orders. And again I was conscious of the strength of his personality. The quiet confidence of the man made itself felt by those with whom he came in contact.

I thanked him for the successful accomplishment

of the mission on which I had sent him. He saluted gravely, and his eyes smiled almost imperceptibly, just enough for me to see that he appreciated my thanks. I questioned him about his journey, which had not been altogether uneventful; but he made nothing of the difficulties which he had encountered. He was a man who was made to combat and sweep away opposition, and it seemed only natural that obstacles which would prove insurmountable to the ordinary man should sink into insignificance before him. There are other men of his stamp in Russia, and some day they will have to be reckoned with by the Powers that be, unless they enlist them on their side.

I sent Ivan away to get food and rest, and went with my letter to the little bedroom at the back of the house where the floor-boards were movable. There we held a consultation.

When I announced that two of them could start for Tomsk in the *droshka* the following day, it was interesting to watch the effect of the news upon them. Yankevitch at once began to make all the arrangements. Grazinski and himself would start at six o'clock in the morning, and Kolka and I could follow after. Feeling ashamed that his anxiety to get away had led him to thrust forward his claims unduly he suggested that Kolka and I should go first. Grazinski left the matter entirely in my hands. Kolka expressed his intention of remaining behind with me whilst the other two went on. I settled the matter by making them draw lots. It fell out that Grazinski and Kolka were to be the first to go. To the

fortunes of the ballot I insisted on all adhering, though I think Kolka would have preferred to wait behind with me.

Accordingly, the next morning the *droshka* and pair were waiting on the road with Ivan to drive. I dared not trust them with the worthy Petrushka, good fellow as he was. But with Ivan I felt they were safe; so we bade farewell to Kolka and Grazinski, with a word to Ivan not to spare the horses, but to return as soon as possible. They disappeared down the road in a cloud of dust and to the cracking of Ivan's whip, and Yankevitch and I returned to the widow's house.

CHAPTER XVII

WAITING

It was now near the end of September. The days were beginning to shorten perceptibly. Morning and evening there was a touch of cold in the air, and the forest took on a gloomy aspect as the days drew in and the leaves of the hardwood trees littered the ground.

Yankevitch and I made gallant efforts to possess our souls in patience until Ivan could return for us with the horses; but we knew that at least three weeks must elapse before he arrived, and it might be longer if Anatovitch saw good reason for delay, or had difficulty in procuring fresh horses.

Our enforced intimacy gave us the opportunity of becoming mutually well acquainted with one another. I found in the restless, versatile Yankevitch a thinker and philosopher of no mean order. We passed our days in discussions and arguments, often of an abstruse nature. On many subjects we differed widely in opinion, and wrangled over our respective convictions until we became very good friends. He was essentially a pessimist—and no wonder. For my part, I am inclined to optimism, outside of Russia and the countries of the Serb, and our differences led to many friendly arguments.

One day, about a week after the departure of Kolka and Grazinski, the widow shuffled into the little back room where we were at our tea and asked permission to speak to me. I told her to proceed without ceremony; and with some confusion she told her story.

"You see, Bareen," she explained, "I am a poor widow with my four children." Then she corrected herself. "No, Bareen, I am no longer poor, thanks to the Holy Mother and to you."

I begged her to couple my name with no ladies, and to come to the point.

"When you came here we did not know what happiness was. Ah, how hard we used to work!—Myself and the girls and the *paltchik* (little boy)—and we could scarcely make a living selling things in the village and to the convicts at the camp. It was hard, Bereen, very hard! Then you came with your two servants." She paused, and once more became covered with confusion.

"Well," I said, "go on, matushka."

"Of course Ivan is like ice; but Petrushka——"

"What about Petrushka?"

"Petrushka," said the old lady, crumpling up the corner of her apron. "Petrushka wants to marry my daughter, Soinia, and I have come to ask your permission, and your blessing."

"I don't see that my blessing would be of much use to them," I answered; "and as to my permission, Petrus is not really my servant, though he is serving me for the time being. He is a *dentchik* to an officer in Tomsk."

"That is what Petrushka told my Soinia," said the widow triumphantly. I think she was gratified to find that Petrushka was a man of truth.

"If they are both satisfied," I continued, "I do not suppose that his master will resent it, and I will undertake that he gives his permission."

There was an inclination on the part of the widow to throw herself on the ground and kiss my feet again; but this I sternly repressed, much to the amusement of Yankevitch. Then I sent for Petrus and his *fiancée*, who came in looking thoroughly ashamed of themselves. I asked Petrus what he proposed to live on when he was married. He drew a delightful picture of wedded bliss, in which he still figured as a *dentchik* in the service, whilst his wife sold *fulkas* (rolls) at a stall in the market-place. He had already amassed a fortune of eighteen roubles by careful hoarding of gratuities received whilst in service, and this he referred to as a "start in life." Neither of them knew of the 100 roubles which fell to Soinia as her share of the reward for assisting in the rescue of Kolka and his companions, and I did not mention it to them. But I promised Soinia a wedding present of fifty roubles.

"Will it be his, too?" she asked doubtfully.

"Certainly," I answered. "It will be yours and his."

"I would not like to have it if it would not belong to Petrushka as well as to me," she explained simply. "But since the Bareen says that it will belong to both of us, may the Holy Mother bless him for his goodness."

Petrus joined tearfully in her benediction, and they left the room together in a state of delirious happiness at the prospect before them.

"How little it takes to make the simple-minded happy," I said to Yankevitch, when they had gone.

"Oh, yes, my friend, they are happy enough," he answered, "as the beasts of the field are happy. Ignorance may be bliss, but I would rather have knowledge with bitterness. God knows that I and my friends have drunk deep enough of the cup. We may yet be compelled to drain it to the last drop; but so long as it is spiced with the leaves of the tree of knowledge we shall not thrust it aside."

When I looked out of my window the next morning the sky was overcast with heavy clouds. A cold north wind drove them down upon the forest and moaned through the branches of the stooping trees. It swept in shrieking gusts over the roof of the house, which groaned and rattled beneath the blast. And then, in its violence, it tore the filmy lining of the clouds and dashed the flakes of snow in whirling myriads to the earth.

In an hour's time the snow lay piled in drifts against hillocks, banks, and tree trunks. The wind moderated; but still the snow fell thick, lying in even purity on the ground, and splashing the dark verdure of the firs with clinging patches of whiteness.

I found Yankevitch in the depths of despair.

"It will be weeks before Ivan can return if the weather holds like this," he grumbled.

"On the contrary," I said, "He will come with

a sledge in half the time that he would take with the droshka."

"The road must settle first," Yankevitch objected. "A thaw may come any day and spoil it."

He was justified in his prognostications. For a week the weather remained unsettled, so that a man starting on a long journey by road would not know whether to take carriage or sleigh for his purpose, and would judiciously delay his departure until the weather declared itself. For a sleigh on a bare road is as useless as a carriage in a snow-drift.

So we waited impatiently for Ivan's return until the end of October. One day he presented himself in his *pelshubka* and heavy boots, a thorough Russian, and with a respectful greeting handed me a letter from Anatovitch.

I told Ivan to get his dinner and rest, and sent Petrus to attend to the horses and sleigh, for there was no longer any doubt about the state of the road, and Anatovitch had sent a large sleigh with a high back and noble expanse of splash-board.

Then I eagerly tore open the letter and read it aloud to Yankevitch. Anatovitch had been delighted to receive my guests in safety. Dr. Grazinski was already on the way to Warsaw, where he was to pass the frontier at night and await me at Konigsberg. Kolka, he said, was as safe with him in Tomsk as he could be anywhere, and he would stay there until we joined him. He had sent a fresh pair of horses and a sleigh for us, and hoped we would start as soon as possible. He had given Ivan fur coats and felt-over boots for us all, so

that we should keep warm on the journey. The letter ended with expressions of congratulation and good-will.

"Dear soul!" Yankevitch exclaimed, when I had finished reading.

"Yes," I answered, "he is a dear soul, with a noble nature."

"Two qualities which are out of place in this country, and which will eventually land him in a penal settlement," said Yankevitch.

"I hope not," I replied, "for much as I admire the fine woodland scenery of Siberia, I am not anxious to follow up my researches in pathology in this part of the world again."

The snow was still deep on the road, and there had been very little traffic as yet to tread it down; and Ivan recommended that we should wait three days before setting out, to rest the horses and give the road a chance of improvement.

Yankevitch chafed at the delay; but there were several things to be done before we could leave. Another small sleigh must be procured from the village for Petrus and the third horse; and a marriage ceremony was due to be performed, which would add another passenger to the second sleigh.

The widow was quite satisfied that Soinia and Petrushka should be married before our departure; and though the good Petrus had some qualms about marrying without the consent of his master, I took the responsibility on myself, and started off in the snow to fetch my friend the pope from the village.

The priest was mightily surprised to see me again.

I told him that I was on my return journey, and had called to see him on business. His holiness liked the sound of the word. It was suggestive of more roubles. So he washed down the last mouthful of the *kolbash*, which he was eating, with a glass of *vodka* and turned a beaming countenance towards me.

"*Eh, paltchik moia!*" he exclaimed. "What can I do for you?"

I requested him to be kind enough to come with me and perform a marriage ceremony. He was delighted at the prospect.

"That is right, my *paltchik*, that is right! Marriage is ordained by Heaven."

"Is that where the roubles come from, batushka?" I asked irreverently, digging my fist into his fat ribs.

"Oï, oï, *paltchik*," he grunted. "You have a strong fist."

"Well, then, to business. I want you to marry a couple of poor villagers, and I shall pay the costs."

"It is good, my *paltchik*, to help the poor. The Holy Mother will reward you tenfold."

"That may be," I answered; "but I never received a kopek from the Holy Mother for that rouble which I gave you some time ago."

The pope shook his head reproachfully, and the greasy tresses of his long hair flopped against his shoulders.

"We must not expect to receive the rewards of our good works in this world, *paltchik*," he protested.

"Then, when I ask you to marry this poor couple, am I to refer you to the next world for payment?"

"The rich should pay for the poor," said the holy

man thoughtfully, "and therefore you pay me for the ceremony, and the Holy Mother will pay you back in the next world."

And on that understanding we started out for the widow's house.

"The quicker you perform your business and clear out of the house the higher your pay will be," I assured him, as we neared our destination.

It was a quaint entertainment. The widow and her children, dressed in their best, kissed the garments of the pope when he entered, and ranged themselves stiffly against the wall of the room. Ivan was present, looking more serious than ever. Petrushka was awkward and shy. Soinia was perfectly composed.

Mindful of my admonition the pope lost no time in the despatch of the ceremony. And having given them his blessing and drunk a couple of glasses of *vodka*, he hurried out, taking care to notice that I followed him. I thrust three roubles into his palm, and may the blessings which he bestowed on me fall on his own head!

After he had taken his departure, Alexai Yankevitch, attorney-at-law, emerged from his hiding-place underground and joined in the congratulations to the happy pair.

There was nothing now to detain us longer in the widow's house. The road was in good condition and the horses fit for the journey. So we bade farewell to the widow and her family, who were all in tears at our departure, and on the 4th of November started back to Tomsk.

CHAPTER XVIII

LIBERTY

THE road was in excellent condition, and the morning bright and still, with that exhilarating coldness that makes the blood tingle in the veins and awakens the joy of life. We were all in the highest spirits; even Ivan so far relaxed as to shout words of encouragement to the horses, who laid themselves out for the journey with a dash and eagerness that promised well for our progress.

Petrushka and his wife followed in the little sleigh behind us. For thirty miles we skimmed down the Moscow road without drawing rein. Yankevitch looked at the forest slipping away from us with kaleidoscopic effects, as the stems of the tall trees crossed and zigzagged in and out and fell behind us, and he laughed aloud.

"Those trees didn't flash past like that the last time I saw them," he said. "I used to count them as we trudged along in chains. It took an eternity to pass a hundred; but it kept me from thinking of other things."

We made sixty miles that day, and passed the night in a wayside house. Yankevitch and I slept on the oven, which is regarded as the "best bedroom" in a Russian house in winter.

The next day the road was more difficult. There were several steep inclines, and on the flat tops where the forest no longer protected the road the wind had swept away the snow, and made the "going" very thin. Forty-two miles were all that we were able to accomplish. But I was determined to spend the fourth night at the house of the old Sabbatarian who had shown us so much hospitality on our outward journey. To reach his house we had upwards of 100 miles to travel in the two days, and I ordered an early start.

It was a bitterly cold morning, the wind blew down upon us from the north-east, and I was afraid that it would bring another fall of snow before night and spoil the road. There was no pleasure in the drive that day, for the intense cold made it impossible to enjoy oneself. The horses resented it as much as we did, and at the end of the day they presented a "tucked up" appearance, and Ivan reported that they were off their feed. The snow came, as I had anticipated, about four o'clock, and we sought shelter for the night in the first house that we came across. When we started on the fourth morning the weather had cleared and the wind had dropped. The house of the Sabbatarian was more than fifty miles distant; but I made up my mind to reach it, if possible, as I was anxious to arrive in Tomsk early on the fifth day.

The fresh snow impeded our progress not a little; and at mid-day we had made only thirty miles, and the horses showed signs of fatigue. So we rested at a dilapidated hovel for three hours and fed them. When we started again, I noticed that Ivan was

nursing them carefully. He kept them to a steady pace of about eight miles an hour, and Petrus, who followed close behind us, had some difficulty in keeping his horse even to that moderate speed.

We had covered about fifteen miles when night overtook us, and there were still seven or eight miles to be traversed before we reached our destination. However, the moon was up, and the reflections of her beams on the snow made our path clear enough. I was admiring the beauty of the night and the effects produced by the moonbeams on the trees and snow, when I heard Ivan talking to his horses.

"Steady, then, steady!" he was saying; and it struck me as singular that he should find it necessary to steady his tired horses at the end of a long journey.

A moment later the sleigh behind shot up and passed us at full gallop, with Petrus laying on to the reins with all his might. Our horses caught the infection, and broke too. Ivan, standing up, took a twist of the reins round his wrists, and lay back on them. And turning his head towards us he said quietly:

"Get your guns ready, Bareen. It is the wolves."

I fumbled beneath my *palshubka* for my revolver, and produced it, and as I did so I heard the sharp crack of a rifle from the sleigh in front of us. Soinia was standing up at the back of the sleigh with her husband's rifle in her hands, and she was reloading it as I caught sight of her. Then I looked back, and I could see the beastly eyes of the wolves following in our wake.

I fired amongst them, apparently without effect.

But the rifle from the sleigh in front cracked again, and one of the pack rolled over in the snow. In an instant a dozen of the wolves turned upon their fallen comrade and devoured him. Yankevitch was anxious to have a shot at the cannibals, and I handed my revolver to him. He fired, and another wolf at the head of the pack stumbled, and met his fate at the jaws of his fellows.

Meanwhile Soinia was firing with unerring effect, and for every wolf that fell a dozen stopped to eat him. The horses, with flattened ears, tore along the road, scattering the snow in all directions.

The wolves kept up the pursuit until we were in sight of the lights of the Sabbatarian's house, though their numbers were considerably reduced by the fire of Soinia and Yankevitch and the members of the pack who had stopped to feast on their comrades.

I think we were all glad to arrive in safety at the humble abode of the old Sabbatarian. He received us with the greatest hospitality, and expressed his pleasure at seeing us again. I told him of our experience; and he said that the wolves at this time of year were a menace to the neighbourhood. The hard frost, and consequent difficulty in procuring food, made them ferocious and fearless from hunger. He had often seen them within a couple of hundred yards from his house, and they would devour anything they came across.

Again we found a comfortable bed on the oven, whither we retired after an interesting conversation with our host on the views and tenets of the Sabbatarians.

We were but thirty versts from Tomsk, and I sent Petrushka on, in the morning, to warn Anatovitch of our approach.

"You can leave your wife with us," I said, "and do not say anything to your master about her until I come."

So Petrus drove on ahead of us to Tomsk, and we followed a couple of hours later.

Anatovitch met us in a *troica* a few miles out of the town. And after mutual salutations, and a look of curiosity on his part at the pretty Soinia, who was seated in the sleigh between us, he insisted on taking Yankevitch away from me and conducting him to a place of safety in the town.

"I suppose you will go to the hotel," he said, addressing himself to me. "I will come and see you this evening."

I deposited Soinia at the entrance of the town, out of consideration for the convenances, and told her to walk to the hotel, and drove on by myself through the streets.

The Tartar proprietor was overjoyed to see me again. He conducted me to the best rooms in the hotel, and on the table of the sitting-room a bottle of imported champagne awaited me. I was stiff and tired after the journey, and glad enough to find myself in comfortable rooms once more.

In the evening Anatovitch came to see me, and he stayed until two o'clock in the morning, for we had a great deal to tell one another. I recounted to him all that had happened since I left Tomsk in the summer, and wound up with the confession that I

had married his *dentchik* to a fair Siberian, whom he had seen in the sleigh with us in the morning. Anatovitch was vastly amused at this episode, and laughed heartily over it.

Then he told me his news. He had despatched Grazinski to Germany *vid* Warsaw; but he had intended to keep Kolka in Tomsk until our arrival. Later on, however, he had found it advisable to send him out of the country, and he was now in Memel, where Grazinski had joined him, so they were both in safety. Old Dr. Bogdanovitch was selling his estate in Vyatka, and intended to make his home in Mentone, where his married daughter was living.

"As to Yankevitch," he said, in conclusion, "you can leave him to me. I have all my plans ready for getting him out of the country if you can find the money. All my little hoard went in getting Kolka out of the way."

The generous soul had spent his last rouble on his friends; but fortunately there were still plenty of notes in my belt, and we adjusted financial matters satisfactorily.

I only once again saw Yankevitch before he left Tomsk, and that was two hours before he started. I gave him some letters of introduction to friends of mine in New York and Baltimore, for he intended to go to America, and we said good-bye.

"I shall go to our friends in Memel first," he said, "and then to America. We shall meet again, Mr. Joubert, if I live, we shall meet again."

Thus the three men who had been the victims of the blind savagery of the "God on Earth" were

delivered out of his hands. I was left in Tomsk with Mahommed Anatovitch and Ivan.

Anatovitch and I were sitting together in my room at the hotel three days after the departure of Yankevitch.

"Do you remember," I said, "that I once made a proposition to you, which you refused to consider so long as Alexander Bogdanovitch was a prisoner? Kolka is free now, and, therefore, I am at liberty to renew the subject."

"You mean your proposal that I should leave Russia and practise medicine in England," he answered eagerly.

"Yes," I said. "Will you come?"

"But I have no means to procure a practice. I am tied to Russia with the bonds of poverty."

"You are too proud to accept financial assistance; but if there is anything in the bond of true friendship you will not refuse to let me help you. If you will come to England with me I will undertake that you obtain a start."

Anatovitch sat with his head resting in the palms of his hands thinking. I could see that the temptation to accept my offer was strong, whilst his pride and a stern sense of duty urged him to reject it.

"If you stay here," I said at last, "what will your fate be? You cannot conscientiously do your duty and remain a free man. You are bound, sooner or later, to cry out against the iniquities perpetrated by a corrupt government, and then you will go where Kolka has been. In Russia fetters are a necessity, and if a man will not wear them on his

understanding he must submit to them on his limbs. Why should you submit? Why not go to a country where there is liberty of thought and conviction and freedom to speak?"

Presently he rose from his chair and, coming up to me, laid his hand on my shoulder.

"I will come with you," he said.

The details of our departure were soon settled. Anatovitch was to obtain two months leave of absence, and we would go together to our friends, the Bogdanovitches, in Vyatka, and thence to England.

I summoned Ivan, intending to bid him farewell and dismiss him to his home in Lithuania.

"Well, Ivan," I said, "our work is done, and right well have you performed your heavy share of it. You can leave for your home to-morrow, if it suits you."

Ivan drew himself up to his full height.

"No, Bareen," he answered, "I cannot go."

I looked at him in surprise.

"What is there to prevent your going?" I asked.

"I have strict orders not to leave you, Bareen, until you are in my master's hands."

"Bravo, Ivan!" Anatovitch cried. "Bravely spoken indeed! *Maladetch Ivan da Bogh!*"

Ivan looked at him unemotionally.

"It is an order," he said, by way of explanation. "When my master sent me to the Bareen, he said: 'You will return with my friend, or you will not return at all.' I cannot go back without you, Bareen."

"You are under arrest," said Anatovitch, "and

you will have to go with Ivan. But first you must both come with me to Vyatka." And so it was arranged.

We paid a visit to old Dr. Bogdanovitch and his daughters, and found them preparing to leave the place. The estate was already sold, and they were packing up their household gods—there were no ikons amongst them—for transportation to a happier land.

The old man greeted me tenderly, and he said many things which must remain secret between us. He looked years younger than when I had last seen him in the Hotel de France, St. Petersburg, nearly a year before, and he was very happy.

I stayed with them only a few days, and then started with Ivan for Lithuania, leaving Anatovitch behind us. It was very evident that he was a *persona grata* in the house, more especially with the younger sister, Vera Bogdanovitch. I am sure that he found much pleasure in helping her to pack. This I can say without indiscretion, for Vera Bogdanovitch is now Madame Anatovitch.

So I took leave of them all, arranging to meet Anatovitch in Memel in a month's time, and journeyed with Ivan to Lithuania.

Ivan solemnly handed me over to Dimitri Stankevitch. He had accomplished his mission, and he took up his daily duties at the point where they had been interrupted by his journey to Eastern Siberia. The last time I saw my great, lion-hearted Ivan, he was seated on a bench in the garden with my little god-son on his knee, and the other children rushing

madly around him in the snow. He was still perfectly grave and reserved; but the little fellow nestled confidingly against his *palshubka*, and Ivan's strong arms encircled him tenderly.

For the first time Dimitri Stankevitch told "my little sister" the true story of my trip to Russia and of the mysterious departure of Ivan from the household. Needless to say, I had to give full particulars of our doings from the day that I left their house. I was with them for about three weeks, and then a telegram came for me from Memel.

"We are all waiting for you.—Kolka."

And so I bade farewell to my friends, and to the kingdom of the "God on Earth."

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE TSAR

YOUR IMPERIAL MAJESTY,—

For a period of nine years I have had the honour of living in your Majesty's country. I went there of my own free will to study your Majesty's peoples and the conditions under which they live. I have visited every part of the vast Empire over which your Majesty holds sway—from the Baltic to the Caspian sea; from the Black Sea to the Pacific Ocean. I have come in contact with all nations and peoples who acknowledge your Majesty as their ruler, and some who will not acknowledge your Majesty; but over whom, nevertheless, your Majesty holds dominion. I have humbly endeavoured to make myself acquainted with the systems of administration of your Majesty's Church, courts of Justice, services civil and military, and educational methods. I have observed that all the functions of government are centred in your august personality. Your Majesty is the head of the Church, the supreme commander of the land and sea forces, your Majesty is the Law, and under your Majesty's control are all the departments of State.

The responsibilities of government rest upon your Majesty alone. It is therefore to your Imperial Majesty that I presume to address myself, in the

same spirit as a wayfarer on the road, without incurring the charge of undue interference, might summon the owner of a house to warn him that there is a fire smouldering beneath the eaves.

I have seen the smoke issuing from the crannies of your Majesty's house. Since I was an inmate of the structure I can also speak to the fact that the beams are rotten as tinder, and they will burn fiercely when the fire reaches them.

Let me direct your Majesty's attention to the state of the pillars of the edifice. The Church which boasts Christ as its head in heaven, and your Majesty as its head on earth, teaches superstition to the people and fosters ignorance. Are these things in accord with the teachings of Him who proclaimed Himself "The Light of the World?" And is your Majesty to be acquitted of the charge of blasphemy in allowing the divine right of kings to be extended to the presumption of a god-head on earth? Is the rigorous persecution by the Church of those who differ from her doctrines part of the mission of Him whose birth was heralded with "Peace on earth and goodwill towards men?" At the doors of the holy Russian Church lie the massacres of the Jews in Kischinieff and Kiev, and many other places within your Majesty's dominions. The persecution of the Poles and the Finns she justifies on the plea of heresy, yet they too acknowledge Christ to be the Lord, though they are reluctant to bow the knee before the "God on Earth." Herein lies their heresy.

The Church is the strongest pillar in your Majesty's house, but it is rotten and corrupt.

Turn, then, to the pillar of Justice. It is ornamented with carvings of grotesque design. Here a drunken judge slavers over the Book of Rights, whilst his learned brother pockets the bribe which the litigant offers him. Here are twelve poor men, whose eyes are bandaged and their ears and mouths stopped up—they are the jury, who are enjoying the privilege of trial by peers; but they have no say in the verdict. The nervous-looking men who are speaking are the counsel, who dare not exercise their forensic powers to the full extent lest they should be made to exchange places with the prisoner in the dock. Your Majesty will observe that the police and court officials are represented with coins in the place of eyes and mouths. The endless procession of wretched forms which encircles the pillar are the men and women who have been sent to the penal settlements without trial. The capital is ornamented with the thongs of the Cossack's knout, the emblem of law and order throughout your Imperial Majesty's dominions. The pillar is crumbling with corruption, and some day it may fall on your Majesty's head.

The pillar of education and culture is constructed entirely of paper, and is flimsy and inflammable. I presume that it is on account of its combustible qualities that your Majesty denies education to his subjects. It is dangerous for children to play with fire, and therefore the "Little Father" takes away the light. Even the gymnasiums and universities are a terror to your Majesty, and the feeble flicker of their beams is constantly being extinguished by order of your Majesty, lest the flames should spread

too far and kindle the sparks of intelligence in the minds of many.

Your Majesty has hidden the candle of knowledge under the bushel of the censorship; but, in spite of all precautions, the smoke leaks out from under the flooring. There is a fire smouldering somewhere.

The fourth pillar of your Imperial Majesty's house is a mighty structure. It is built up of 5,000,000 of armed men, of guns, and lately-battered ships. The strength of this pillar is being subjected to a test at this moment. How does it stand it, your Majesty? Are all the stores and munitions of war complete? Is your Majesty satisfied that none of his officers has sold information to the enemy? These questions deserve the consideration of your Majesty, for in times of peace the army is corrupt and the officers prey upon their men. The pillar has a formidable appearance; but, for all that, it is crumbling with corruption within.

May I venture to direct your Majesty's attention from the pillars to the wall of the house? For on the wall is something written which has possibly escaped your Majesty's notice in the darkness of the house.

I am no Daniel, but I can read the writing on the wall, for it is only one word—"Revolution."

Your Majesty is worshipped and beloved of his people. So was Louis XVI. of France. France had only one Marat; but there are more men of his stamp in Russia than your Majesty could count. There are also many Robespierres and Dantons. The Reign of Terror in France will sink into insignificance and oblivion when the day of the Russian Revolution

dawns. Each government will mete out her own particular ideas of justice; each state will have her own terrors; each village its tree of execution; and the "heads" will be demanded by the thousands.

The seeds of revolution are already sown in your Majesty's dominions. There are mothers bringing up sons who will be the judges of vengeance, and who are now learning to lisp the word. There are in foreign universities young Russians who are studying science with set jaws, and thinking; but they will not always be thinking. In the breast of every humble moujik there is a consuming fire. He is ignorant and cannot diagnose the malady, and he is patient in his suffering. But when the young men return from the foreign universities and tell him the real nature of his disease, and fan the smouldering fire within him, the bestial flame of savagery will leap out, destroying in wanton fury all whom he is incited to destroy.

Thus the trouble in your Majesty's dominions will come from within. And it is not by the secret police and *politzmaisters* that it can be averted; neither is it by the censorship; nor by the suppression of education; nor by persecution and massacre, effectually as these means have hitherto served to keep the house of Romanov in power.

But let your Majesty lift himself above his ancestors, and leave a name behind him which will be honoured and revered by all posterity, as the liberator of his country from oppression and ignorance. The revenue which your Majesty would obtain from the abolition of the censorship would pay for the free

education of the nation. The recall from the penal settlements of the learned and honest men whom your Majesty has exiled thither without trial would enable him to fill the vacancies in the legal and civil services, caused by the expulsion of drunken and dishonest judges and officials. From the ranks of the men who have been driven out of Russia by the maladministration of justice, your Majesty would be able to choose wise and prudent counsellors to occupy the positions of those Ministers who now surround you, whose counsel is dictated neither by love of your Majesty nor for the welfare of their country, but for the benefit of the class from which they are drawn.

The grant of equal rights in the eye of the law to all your Majesty's subjects without respect to creed, colour, or race, is an elementary form of justice which is only to be expected of an enlightened monarch.

Freedom of speech and of the press are not regarded as dangers to the peace of civilised countries.

It is only by granting reforms such as these that the day of revolution can be averted.

The smoke, your Imperial Majesty, is issuing from the eaves of your house, and I have taken the liberty of warning your Majesty of the fact.

CARL JOUBERT.

APPENDIX I

THE TITLES OF HIS IMPERIAL MAJESTY NICHOLAS ALEXANDROVITCH

Nicholas the Second, Emperor and Autocrat of all the Russias, Moscow, Kieff, Vladimir, Novgorod.

Tsar of Kazan.

Tsar of Astrakhan, Poland, Siberia, Chersonesus-Taurica, Grusia.

Sovereign of Pskoff, and

Grand Duke of Smolensk, Litwa, Volhynia, Padolia, and Finland.

Duke of Estland, Lifland, Kurland and Smigalsk, Samogitsk, Belvetok, Korelsk, Tver, Yugorsk, Perm, Vyatka, Bolgarien, and others.

Sovereign and Grand Duke of the Niederlands of Novgorod, Chernigoff, Ryzan, Polotsk, Rastov, Yaroslaf, Beloziorsk, Vodorsk, Obdorsk, Kondijsk, Vitebsk, Ulstislavi, and all other Northern lands the Commadoe.

Sovereign of Everck, Kartalinsk, and Kabardinsk lands, and Armenia Regions, and

Sovereign Heir and Possessor To the Dukes of Cherkoss and Gorskia.

Sovereign of Turkestan, and

Heir of Norway.

Duke of Schleswig-Holstein, Fehmarn, Ditmarsen, etc.

By 70,000,000 of people in Russia the Holy Tsar is known as the "Zembla Bogh"—the God on Earth, or the Little Father.

APPENDIX II

A LIST OF SOME OF THE PRINCIPAL OUTRAGES AND MURDERS PERPETRATED ON THE JEWS BY THE CHRISTIANS UNDER THE SYSTEM INTRODUCED BY M. POBIEDONOSTSEFF, THE PROCURATOR OF THE HOLY SYNOD

YELISABETGRAD.—15th–18th April, 1881. The Jewish quarter pillaged and burnt, and the Jews destroyed unmercifully. No details of casualties available.

DISTRICT OF YELISABETGRAD AND ALEXANDRIA.—17th–21st April, 1881. General outrages on the Jews, in which the officials took a hand. No details of casualties available.

ANANIEFF AND THE GOLTAH DISTRICT.—17th April, 1881. The Jews met with the same treatment as in Yelisabetgrad.

BERESOVKA.—26th April, 1881. 159 private houses were robbed and destroyed, also 28 shops and business houses.

ANNANIEFF.—27th April, 1881. 175 private houses and 24 business houses were destroyed, mostly the property of poor ews.

ANNANIEFF DISTRICT.—28th April to 1st May, 1881. Eight villages of Jews were destroyed and the inhabitants exterminated.

KIEFF.—23rd–26th April, 1881. Massacre and outrages of the Jewish inhabitants of a fearful description.

VOSILKOFF.—29th and 30th April, 1881. Extermination of the Jews.

OSATRE, NEAR KIEFF.—29th and 30th April, 1881. Massacre and robbery of the Jews.

ZMARINKAH.—27th April, 1881. Massacre and robbery of the Jews.

KONOTOP.—27th–29th April, 1881. Several Jews murdered and robbed. The officials shared in the spoils. Nine villages in the district wiped out.

SMEALAH AND CHERKASS DISTRICT.—3rd and 4th May, 1881. Thirteen villages destroyed and the inhabitants massacred.

VOLOCHISK.—5th May, 1881. Volochisk and the neighbouring villages were destroyed by fire and sword.

ODESSA.—3rd–5th May, 1881. Massacre and robbery of Jews, in which the authorities took part.

JEWISH COLONY, NEAR ODESSA.—4th–10th May, 1881. The colony was wiped out and their effects plundered.

NIKOLAIEFF.—1st–4th May, 1881. The Jews destroyed by fire and sword.

ALEXANDROFFSK AND NOVOMOSCVA DISTRICTS.—1st May, 1881. Massacre and robbery, with arson.

KHARKOFF AND BERDJANSK.—4th–6th May, 1881. Massacre and robbery, in which the officials joined.

BERDJANSK AND MARIENPOL.—18th and 19th May, 1881. As above.

DONSKOI LOSOVO.—6th May, 1881. At the Sevastopol railway station, outrage of women and massacre.

ROMNY.—6th and 7th May, 1881. Romny and neighbouring villages destroyed. Children murdered in the presence of representatives of the Church.

KIEFF.—8th May, 1881. 2000 Jews were left homeless, their houses pillaged and burnt, stores sacked, men murdered in the streets, women outraged publicly, and babies thrown from the windows of the houses.

YAROSLAV.—30th June and 14th July, 1881. In Yaroslav and the neighbouring villages was a repetition of the scenes in Kieff.

NEZIN.—21st and 22nd July, 1881. Jews murdered in the streets and their dead bodies robbed.

FAODOSIA.—2nd June, 1881. Massacre and robbery of Jews.

ODESSA.—14th–18th November, 1881. A repetition of the scenes in Kieff.

KROSILNIKOFF.—28th and 29th December, 1881. Massacre and robbery of Jews.

WARSAW.—12th–15th December, 1881. 298 business houses, 690 small shops, 519 private houses were burnt or made desolate. The synagogues were polluted, and nearly a hundred Jews were never accounted for.

Extract from "Encyclopædia Britannica," vol. 24, p. 475:

"Within a few weeks the whole of Western Russia, from the Black Sea to the Baltic, was smoking with the ruins of Jewish homes. Scores of Jewish women were dishonoured, hundreds of men, women, and children were slaughtered, and tens of thousands were reduced to beggary and left without a shelter. Murders, riots, or incendiary outrages took place in no fewer than 167 towns and villages, including Warsaw, Odessa, and Kieff. Europe had witnessed no such scenes of mob savagery since the Black Death massacres in the fourteenth century."

So much for 1881, the first year of the gentle system inaugurated by M. Pobiedonostseff.

1882.

In this year there were massacres of the Jews, attended by the usual horrors at:

BALTA DISTRICT, KAMENTS.
MOGHILEFF.

1883.

ROSTOFF.
EKATERINOSLAFF.
KRIVOY-ROG.

1884.

NIJNI NOVGOROD.

DOMBROVITZA, DISTRICT OF ROVNO.

Every year until 1895 there were frequent massacres of the Jews in some part or other of Russia. Then there was a pause in the orgie of Jew-murder, and until 1903 massacres were not so frequent, though of annual occurrence at Easter, when the old story of the Jews murdering Christian children, to knead their unleavened bread with their blood, is regularly circulated by the popes of the Russian Church. Kischinieff and Gomel foot the list, and prove to the civilised world that M. Pobiedonostseff has lost none of his savage vindictiveness against the Children of Israel. From 1880 until 1904 M. Pobiedonostseff has filled the post of first adviser to the Tsar, as Procurator of the Holy Synod. He is responsible for the "May Laws" and the system of rigorous persecution of all unorthodox persons, whether Jews, Christians, or Mahommedans. The Protestant Stundists suffered under his direction afflictions almost as dire as those of the Jews. To the instigation of M. Pobiedonostseff must be traced the murder of thousands of innocent persons, the violation of countless women and girls, the destruction by fire of the homes of tens of thousands of helpless Jews. M. Pobiedonostseff is to this day the chief adviser of the Tsar, and the Procurator of the Holy Synod. His influence with his Royal Masters has been, and is, enormous. Alexander III. was completely in his power, and turned a deaf ear to the appeals of the civilised world, and even of the Tsaritsa herself, on behalf of the persecuted Jews, refusing with coarse oaths to hear their name mentioned in his presence. His influence with Nicholas II. seems to be equally strong, and old age has not abated his bloodthirstiness nor weakened his savage hatred of the heretic.

Printed by BALLANTYNE, HANSON & Co.
London & Edinburgh

A SELECTION OF

Works of General Literature

PUBLISHED BY

EVELEIGH NASH

32 BEDFORD STREET, STRAND,
LONDON, W.C.

Important Work on Russia in the Orient.

In Two Vols. Royal 8vo. With Maps and Illustrations.
Price 32s.

ASIATIC RUSSIA

By GEORGE FREDERICK WRIGHT, LL.D.

"A book which may with great advantage be consulted on almost every Russian question. It contains an enormous amount of information . . . Such information exists only in Russian or in German shape, and it is well that those who are likely to be interested in Russian questions should have in their library this book by Dr. Wright, that they may turn over his stores of knowledge."—*The Athenæum.*

"This is not the ordinary book of travel, but a work on the scientific, historical, and political aspects of Siberia. He studies in turn the physical geography, the history and nature of the Russian occupation, the political divisions, the social, economic, and political conditions, and the natural history."—*The Times.*

"He has compiled the two handsome volumes now before us for the sake of future travellers in a similar predicament, and they will also be valuable to all who wish to understand the physical basis of the vast

Russian power in Asia. Dr. Wright has done his work with great thoroughness."—*The Spectator.*

"We can commend Mr. Wright's volumes as containing a vast amount of information of the utmost value to every systematic student of the whole subject of the Russian advance in Asia. The reproductions of photographs with which the work is illustrated are numerous and interesting."—*Pall Mall Gazette.*

"The result of an extended study of the physical history of Siberia and of the provinces of Central Asia under Russian influence, and of their condition, political, social, and industrial, at the commencement of the twentieth century. It may be said that Dr. Wright's work contains so much well-digested information and such abundance of statistical details that it is likely to serve for some years as a source of reference with regard to the varied and vast regions comprised in Asiatic Russia."—*Morning Post.*

Historical Works by Major Martin Hume.

Demy 8vo. With Portrait, price 12s. 6d.

The Courtships of Queen Elizabeth.

By MARTIN HUME, Author of "The Love Affairs of Mary Queen of Scots," &c. &c. Revised Edition with New Chapters on the Personal Relations between Elizabeth and her Favourites.

Uniform with "The Courtships of Queen Elizabeth."

Demy 8vo. With Portraits, price 12s. 6d.

The Love Affairs of Mary Queen of Scots.

By MARTIN HUME.

"This distinguished historian approaches as near to being severely judicial as any historian is ever likely to be."—*Standard.*

"Easily entitles Major Hume to the first rank, if not the first place, among contemporary English historians."—*Saturday Review.*

A Spanish Work by an English Author.

Price 3s. 6d. net.

Españole E Ingleses En El Siglo XVI.

By MARTIN HUME.

Recollections of the Court of William IV. and the early Court of Queen Victoria.

Demy 8vo. With Portraits, 10s. 6d.

My Memories.

By the COUNTESS OF MUNSTER.

"The quaintly stiff etiquette of old English Court life, the glimpses of old-world characters whose oddities belong to the past, the anecdotes of great personages, the very memory of whom is now fast fading away; the reminiscences of exciting incidents in European history which we now read without a tingling of pulse, the description of manners and customs which have disappeared completely in the turmoil of modernity, are flavoured with that old-fashioned charm which we find in Fanny Burney's 'Evelina' or Mrs. Gaskell's 'Cranford.'"—*Daily Chronicle.*

THREE BEAUTIFUL GIFT-BOOKS IN RICH, ORNAMENTAL BINDING.

Milton's England.
By L. A. MEAD. With Illustrations. Price 6s. net.

Uniform with "Milton's England."

Dickens' London.
By FRANCIS MILTOUN. With Illustrations. Price 6s. net.

Uniform with "Dickens' London."

A Woman's Walks.
By Lady COLIN CAMPBELL. With Water-Colour Portrait. Price 6s. net.

A New and Limited Edition.

In Two Vols. Royal 8vo. With 16 rare Portraits in Photogravure, price 21s. net.

The Secret History of the Court of England.

From the Accession of George III. to the Death of George IV. Including, among other important matters, full particulars of the mysterious Death of the Princess Charlotte and the Murder of the Duke of Cumberland's valet, Sellis. By Lady ANNE HAMILTON. A Reprint in full of the Original Edition published in 1832.

Demy 8vo. Price 7s. 6d.

The Coming Reaction:

A Brief Survey and Criticism of the Vices of our Economic System. By LEGISLATOR.

"Whoever 'Legislator' may be, there can be no disputing the fact that he has given the world the most trenchant and original criticism yet produced of the doctrines and theories on which free trade is based."—*Daily Mail.*

"The strongest plea for the abandonment of England's free trade policy which has yet been made."—*New York Sun.*

"Many books have been written against Socialism, but few popular writers have subjected it to so destructive a criticism as 'Legislator.'"—*Sunday Times.*

Crown 8vo. Price 1s.

The Fiscal Dispute Made Easy.

By W. H. MALLOCK, Author of "The New Republic."

Demy 8vo. Price 7s. 6d.

The English Stage.

Being an Account of the Victorian Drama, by AUGUSTIN FILON. Translated from the French by FREDERIC WHYTE, with an Introduction by HENRY ARTHUR JONES

"This large and painstaking volume will certainly interest all who follow theatrical matters. We welcome it as an interesting and valuable record."—*Times.*

LONDON

32 BEDFORD STREET, STRAND, W.C.

00035703

Digitized with financial assistance from



HT Parekh FOUNDATION

An Initiative by HDFC

WITH YOU, RIGHT THROUGH

on 15 October, 2018